ABOVE THE BATTLE



"The fire smouldering in the forest of Europe was beginning to burst into flames In vain did they try to put it out in one place it only broke out in another With gusts of smoke and a shower of sparks it swept from one point to another, burning the dry brushwood Already in the East there were skirmishes as the prelude to the great war of the nations. All Europe, Europe that only yesterday was sceptical and apathetic, like a dead wood, was swept by the flames All men were possessed by the desire for battle War was ever on the point of breaking out It was stamped out, but it sprang to life again The world felt that it was at the mercy of an accident that might let loose the dogs of war. The world lay in wait. The feeling of inevitability weighed heavily even upon the most pacifically minded And ideologues, sheltered beneath the massive shadows of the cyclops, Proudhon, hymned in war man s fairest title of nobility "

"*This, then, was to be the end of the physical and moral resurrection of the races of the West! To such butchery they were to be borne along by the currents of action and passionate faith! Only a Napoleonic genius could have marked out a chosen, deliberate aim for this blind, onward rush But nowhere in Europe was there any genius for action It was as though the world had chosen the most mediocre to be its governors The force of the human mind was in other things—so there was nothing to be done but to trust to the declivity down which they were moving This both governors and governed were doing Europe looked like a vast armed vigil*"

Jean Christophe, vol x (1912).

[English translation by Gilbert Cannan, vol iv p 504]

ABOVE THE BATTLE

BY

ROMAIN ROLLAND

TRANSLATED BY

C K OGDEN, M A

(Editor of *Cambridge Magazine*)

LONDON GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD

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INTRODUCTION

Over the carnage rose prophetic a voice,
Be not dishearten'd, affection shall solve the problem of
freedom yet

(Were you looking to be held together by lawyers?
Or by an agreement on a paper? or by arms?
Nay nor the world, nor any living thing, will so
cohere)

THESE lines of Walt Whitman will be recalled by many who read the following pages for not only does Rolland himself refer to Whitman in his brief Introduction, but, were it not for a certain *bizarrerie* apart from their context, the words "Over the Carnage" might perhaps have stood on the cover of this volume as a striking variant on *Au dessus de la Mêlée*

Yet though the voice comes to us over the carnage, its message is not marred by the passions of the moment After eighteen months of war we are learning to look about us more calmly, and to distinguish amid the ruins those

of Europe's intellectual leaders who have not been swept off their feet by the fury of the tempest. Almost alone Romain Rolland has stood the test. The two main characteristics which strike us in all that he writes are lucidity and commonsense—the qualities most needed by every one in thought upon the war. But there is another feature of Rolland's work which contributes to its universal appeal. He describes our feelings and sensations in the presence of a given situation, not what actually passes before our eyes; he describes the effects and causes of things, but not the things themselves. Through his work for the *Agence internationale des prisonniers de guerre*, to which one of the articles now collected is largely devoted, he is, moreover, in a position to observe every phase of the great battle between ideals and between nations which fills him with such anguish and indignation. And with his matchless insight and sympathy he gives permanent form to our vague feelings in these noble and inspiring essays.

It will not, however, surprise the vast public who have read *Jean Christophe* to find that while so many have capitulated to the madness of the terrible year through which we have passed, Rolland has remained firm, and has surpassed

himself He was prepared [illegible]e extract placed at the beginning of thi[illegible]e shows, he was one of the few who realised only too well the horror he was powerless to prevent. Yet he made every effort to open the eyes of Europe and especially of the young, so many of whom had learned to look up to him as a leader To these young men, one of the finest essays in the present collection is primarily addressed—*O jeunesse héroïque du monde* . . .

Eighteen months have passed and they still endure the terrible ordeal, the young men of Germany and France, whom he had striven so hard to bring together, on whose aspirations and failings *Jean Christophe* is a critical commentary The movements and tendencies of society were there given a dramatic embodiment, permeated for Rolland by the Life Force —that struggle between Good and Bad, Love and Hatred, which makes life worth living All is set down with the clear analysis of feeling natural to a musical critic But in spite of his burning words on the destruction of Rheims, Rolland, as is clear from his other critical and biographical writings, is more interested in men than in their achievements And the men of to day interest him most passionately "Young

men," he has said, "do not bother about the old people Make a stepping-stone of our bodies and go forward"

And above all it is the permanent things in life with which he is concerned As Mr Lowes Dickinson puts it, "M Rolland is one of the many who believe, though their voice for the moment may be silenced, that the spiritual forces that are important and ought to prevail are the international ones, that co operation, not war, is the right destiny of nations, and that all that is valuable in each people may be maintained in and by friendly intercourse with the others The war between these two ideals is the greater war that lies behind the present conflict. Hundreds and thousands of generous youths have gone to battle in the belief that they are going to a 'war that will end war,' that they are fighting against militarism in the cause of peace. Whether, indeed, it is for that they will have risked or lost their lives, only the event can show"

The forces against such ideals are powerful but Rolland is not dismayed "Come, friends let us make a stand! Can we not resist this contagion, whatever its nature and virulence be —whether moral epidemic or cosmic force" And

he appeals not only in the name of humanity but in the name of that France which he loves so dearly—"la vraie France" of which Jaurès wrote (in the untranslatable words which Rolland has quoted), "qui n'est pas résumée dans une époque et dans un jour, ni dans le jour d'il y a des siècles, ni dans le jour d'hier, mais la France tout entière, dans la succession de ses jours, de ses nuits, de ses aurores, de ses crépuscules, de ses montées, de ses chutes, et qui, à travers toutes ces ombres mêlées, toutes ces lumières incomplètes et toutes ces vicissitudes, s'en va vers une pleine clarté qu'elle n'a pas encore atteinte, mais dont le pressentiment est dans sa pensée!"

But though his love of France inspires every word that Rolland has written, the significance of the present volume is not less apparent to English readers. Some of the articles and letters now collected have already appeared in English, for the most part in the pages of *The Cambridge Magazine*, from which they have been widely quoted in the press For help in rendering the translations as adequate as possible I may also take this opportunity of acknowledging my special indebtedness to Mr Roger Fry,[1] who

[1] For translating "The Murder of the Elite"

has just issued through the Omega Workshops a striking translation of some of the most recent French poetry inspired by the war to Mr James Wood who has himself done part of the translation, particularly "Pro Aris" and to Mr E K Bennett, of Caius College, whose version of "Above the Battle" has already been quoted by the Ar[illegible] of Canterbury and others For the mo[illegible] articles here collected have not app[illegible] English before, and they have been almost inaccessible even in French as their author explains in his Preface

C K OGDEN

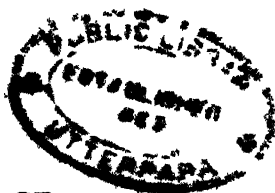
MAGDALENE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE
January 1916

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It is my pleasant duty to thank the brave friends who have defended me during the past year, in the Parisian Press—at the end of October 1914 Amedée [illegible] in *l'Humanité*, and Henri Guilbeaux, in the *Bataille syndicaliste* in the same paper, *Fernand Depres*, Georges Pioch in the *Hommes du Jour*, J M Renaitour in the *Bonnet Rouge*, Rouanet, in *l'Humanité* Jacques Mesnil, in the *Mercure de France* and Gaston Thiesson, in the *Guerre Sociale* To these faithful comrades in the struggle I express my affectionate gratitude

R R

October 1915



PREFACE

A GREAT nation assailed by war has not only its frontiers to protect it must also protect its good sense It must protect itself from the hallucinations injustices, and follies which the plague lets loose To each his part to the armies the protection of the soil of their native land To the thinkers the defence of its thought If they subordinate that thought to the passions of their people they may well be useful instruments of passion but they are in danger of betraying the spirit, which is not the least part of a people s patrimony One day History will pass judgment on each of the nations at war, she will weigh their measure of errors, lies, and heinous follies Let us try and make ours light before her!

Children are taught the Gospel of Jesus and the Christian ideal Everything in the educa tion they receive at school is designed to stimulate in them intellectual understanding of the great human family Classical education makes them see, beyond the differences of race, the roots and the common trunk of our civilisa-

tion Art makes them love the profound sources of the genius of a people Science makes them believe in the unity of reason. The great social movement which renews the world, reveals the organised effort of the working classes all round them to unite their forces, and the hopes and struggles which break the barriers of nation The brightest geniuses of the earth chant, like Walt Whitman and Tolstoi, universal brotherhood in joy and suffering, or else as our Latin spirits, dissolve with their criticism the prejudices of hatred and ignorance which separate individuals and peoples

Like all the men of my time I have been brought up on these thoughts, I have tried in my turn to share the bread of life with my younger or less fortunate brothers When the war came I did not think it my duty to deny these thoughts because the hour had come to put them to the test

I have been insulted I knew that I should be and I went forward But I did not know that I should be insulted without even a hearing

For several months no one in France could know my writings except through scraps of phrases arbitrarily extracted and mutilated by my enemies It is a shameful record For

Preface

nearly a year this has gone on. Certain socialist or syndicalist papers may have succeeded here and there in getting some fragments through, but it was only in the month of June 1915 that for the first time my chief article, the one which was the object of the most violent criticism, "Above the Battle," dating from September 1914 could be published in full (almost in full),[1] thanks to the malevolent zeal of a maladroit pamphleteer, to whom I am indebted for bringing my words before the French public for the first time.

A Frenchman does not judge his adversary unheard. Whoever does so judges and condemns himself, for he shows that he fears the light. I place before the world these texts as they have slandered.[2] I shall not defend them. Let them defend themselves!

[1] One article only, "The Idols," may, I think, have been published in its entirety in *La Bataille syndicaliste*.

[2] I leave my articles in their chronological order. I have changed nothing in them. The reader will notice, in the stress of events, certain contradictions and hasty judgments which I would modify to-day. In general the sentiments expressed have arisen out of indignation and pity. In proportion as the immensity of the ruin extends one feels the poverty of protest, as before an earthquake. "There is more than one war," wrote the aged Rodin to me on the 1st of October 1914. "What is happening is like a punishment which falls on the world."

Preface

One single word will I add For a year I have been rich in enemies Let me say this to them they can hate me, but they will not teach me to hate. I have no concern with them My business is to say what I believe to be fair and humane. Whether this pleases or irritates is not my business I know that words once uttered make their way of themselves Hopefully I sow them in the bloody soil The harvest will come.

ROMAIN ROLLAND

September 1915

I

AN OPEN LETTER TO GERHART HAUPTMANN

Saturday August 29 1914

I AM not, Gerhart Hauptmann, one of those Frenchmen who regard Germany as a nation of barbarians I know the intellectual and moral greatness of your mighty race I know all that I owe to the thinkers of old Germany, and even now at this hour, I recall the example and the words of *our* Goethe—for he belongs to the whole of humanity—repudiating all national hatreds and preserving the calm of his soul on those heights *where we feel the happiness and the misfortunes of other peoples as our own* I myself have laboured all my life to bring together the minds of our two nations, and the atrocities of this impious war in which, to the ruin of

A telegram from Berlin (Wolff's Agency) reproduced by the *Gazette de Lausanne* August 29, 1914, has just announced that the old town of Louvain, rich in works of art exists no more to day

European civilisation they are involved, will never lead me to soil my spirit with hatred.

Whatever pain, then, your Germany may give me, whatever reasons I may have to stigmatise as criminal German policy and the means it employs, I do not attach responsibility for it to the people which is burdened with it and is used as its blind instrument. It is not that I regard, as you do, war as a fatality. A Frenchman does not believe in fatality. Fatality is the excuse of souls without a will. War springs from the weakness and stupidity of nations. One cannot feel resentment against them for it; one can only pity them. I do not reproach you with our miseries, for yours will be no less. If France is ruined, Germany will be ruined too. I did not even raise my voice when I saw your armies violating the neutrality of noble Belgium. This flagrant breach of honour, which incurs the contempt of every upright conscience, is quite in the political tradition of your Prussian kings; it did not surprise me.

But when I see the fury with which you are treating that magnanimous nation whose only crime has been to defend its independence and the cause of justice to the last, as you Germans yourselves did in 1813 . . . that is too much!

The world is revolted by it. Keep these savageries for us Frenchmen, your true enemies! But to wreak them against your victims, against this small unhappy, innocent Belgian people ... how shameful is this!

And not content to fling yourselves on living Belgium you wage war on the dead, on the glories of past ages. You bombard Malines, you burn Rubens, and Louvain is now no more than a heap of ashes—Louvain with its treasures of art and of science, the sacred town! What are you then, Hauptmann, and by what name do you want us to call you now, since you repudiate the title of barbarians? Are you the grandsons of Goethe or of Attila? Are you making war on enemies or on the human spirit? Kill men if you like, but respect masterpieces. They are the patrimony of the human race. You, like all the rest of us, are its depositories; in pillaging it as you do, you show yourselves unworthy of our great heritage, unworthy to take your place in that little European army which is civilisation's guard of honour.

It is not to the opinion of the rest of the world that I address myself in challenging you, Hauptmann. In the name of our Europe, of which you have hitherto been one of the most illustrious

champions, in the name of that civilisation for which the greatest of men have striven all down the ages, in the name of the very honour of your German [illegible]ace, Gerhart Hauptmann I abjure you, I [illegible] you, you and the intellectuals of Ger[illegible]gst w[illegible] reckon so many friends, [illegible] protest with [illegible]our energy against this crime which is recoil[illegible] upon you.

If you fail to do this, you will prove one of two things either that you approve what has been done—and in that case may the opinion of mankind crush you—or else that you are powerless to [illegible] a protest against the Huns who command you. If this be so by what title can you still claim as you have claimed, that you fight for the cause of liberty and human progress? You are giving the world a proof that, incapable of defending the liberty of the world, you are even incapable of defending your own and that the best of Germany is helpless beneath a vile despotism which mutilates masterpieces and murders the spirit of man.

I am expecting an answer from you, Hauptmann, an answer that may be an act. The opinion of Europe awaits it as I do. Think about it: at such a time silence itself is an act.

Journal de Genève, Wednesday September 2, 1914

II

September 1914

AMONG the many crimes of this infamous war which are all odious to us, why have we chosen for protest the crimes against things and not against men, the destruction of works and not of lives?

Many are surprised by this, and have even reproached us for it—as if we have not as much pity as they for the bodies and hearts of the thousands of victims who are crucified! Yet over the armies which fall, there flies the vision of their love, and of *la Patrie*, to which they sacrifice themselves—over these lives which are passing away passes the holy Ark of the art and thought of centuries, borne on their shoulders The bearers can change May the Ark be saved! To the elite of the world falls the task of guarding it And since the common treasure is threatened, may they rise to protect it!

Written after the bombardment of Rheims Cathedral

I am glad to think that in the Latin countries this sacred duty has always been regarded as paramount. Our France which bleeds with so many other wounds, has suffered nothing more cruel than the attack against her Parthenon the Cathedral of Rheims, "Our Lady of France. Letters which I have received from sorely tried families, and from soldiers who for two months have borne every hardship, show me (and I am proud of it for them and for my people) that there was no burden heavier for them to bear. It is because we put spirit above flesh. Very different is the case of the German intellectuals, who, to my reproaches for the sacrilegious acts of their devastating armies, have all replied with one voice, "Perish every *chef d'œuvre* rather than one German soldier!"

A piece of architecture like Rheims is much more than one life: it is a people—whose centuries vibrate like a symphony in this organ of stone. It is their memories of joy, of glory, and of grief, their meditations, ironies, dreams. It is the tree of the race whose roots plunge to the profoundest depths of its soil, and whose branches stretch with a sublime *élan* towards the sky. It is still more: its beauty which soars above the struggles of nations is the harmonious response made by the

human race to the riddle of the world—this light of the spirit more necessary to souls than that of the sun

Whoever destroys this work, murders more than a man, he murders the purest soul of a race His crime is inexpiable, and Dante would have it punished with an eternal agony, eternally renewed We who repudiate the vindictive spirit of so cruel a genius, do not hold a people responsible for the crimes of a few The drama which unfolds itself before our eyes and whose almost certain *dénouement* will be the crushing of the German hegemony is enough for us

What brings it home to us most nearly is that not one of those who constitute the moral and intellectual élite of Germany—that hundred noble spirits and those thousands of brave hearts of which no great nation was ever destitute—not one really suspects the crimes of his Government, the atrocities committed in Flanders, in the north and in the east of France during the two or three first weeks of the war, or (one can safely wager) the voluntary devastations of the towns of Belgium and the ruin of Rheims If they came to look at the reality I know that many of them would weep with grief and shame and of all the shortcomings of Prussian Imperialism, the worst and

the vilest is to have concealed its crimes from its people For by depriving them of the means of protesting against those crimes it has involved them for ever in the responsibility, it has abused their magnificent devotion The intellectuals however, are also guilty For if one admits that the brave men, who in every country tamely feed upon the news which their papers and their leaders give them for nourishment, allow themselves to be duped, one cannot pardon those whose duty it is to seek truth in the midst of error, and to know the value of interested witnesses and passionate hallucinations Before bursting into the midst of this furious debate upon which was staked the destruction of nations and of the treasures of the spirit, their first duty (a duty of loyalty as much as of common sense) should have been to consider the problems from both sides By blind loyalty and culpable trustfulness they have rushed head foremost into the net which their Imperialism had spread They believed that their first duty was with their eyes closed, to defend the honour of their State against all accusation They did not see that the noblest means of defending it was to disavow its faults and to cleanse their country of them

I have awaited this virile disavowal from the

proudest spirits of Germany a disavowal which would have been ennobling instead of humiliating The letter which I wrote to one of them, the day after the brutal voice of Wolff's Agency pompously proclaimed that there remained of Louvain no more than a heap of ashes, was received by the entire élite of Germany in a spirit of enmity They did not understand that I offered them the chance of releasing Germany from the fetters of those crimes which its Empire was forging in its name What did I ask of them? What did I ask of you all, finer spirits of Germany?—to express at least a courageous regret for the excesses committed, and to dare to remind unbridled power that even the Fatherland cannot save itself through crime and that above its rights are those of the human spirit I only asked for *one* voice—a *single* free voice None spoke I heard only the clamour of herds the pack of intellectuals giving tongue on the track whereon the hunter loosed them, and that insolent Manifesto, in which without the slightest effort to justify its crimes you have unanimously declared that they do not exist And your theologians, your pastors your court preachers, have stated further that you are very just and that you thank God for having made you thus Race of Pharisees, what chastise

ment from on high shall scourge your sacrilegious pride! Do you not suspect the evil which you have done to your own people? The megalomania, a menace to the world, of an Ostwald or an H. S. Chamberlain, the criminal determination of ninety-three intellectuals not to wish to see the truth, will have cost Germany more than ten defeats.

* *

When I wrote this I had not yet seen the monstrous article by Thomas Mann in the *Neue Rundschau* of November 1914, where in a fit of fury and injured pride he savagely claimed for Germany as a title to glory all the crimes of which her adversaries accuse her. He dared to write that the present war was a war of German Kultur "against Civilisation," proclaiming that German thought had no other ideal than militarism, and inscribes on his banner the following lines, the apology of force oppressing weakness:

"Denn der Mensch verkümmert im Frieden,
Müssige Ruh ist das Grab des Muts.
Das Gesetz ist der Freund des Schwachen,
Alles will es nur eben machen,
Möchte gern die Welt verflachen,
Aber der Krieg lässt die Kraft erscheinen."

(Man deteriorates in peace. Idle rest is the tomb of courage. Law is the friend of the weak, it aims at levelling all, it would reduce the world to a level. War brings out strength.)

Even so a bull in the arena, mad with rage, rushes with lowered head on the matador's sword, and impales himself

Pro Aris

How clumsy you are! I believe that of all your faults *maladresse* is the worst. You have not said one word since the beginning of this war which has not been more fatal for you than all the speeches of your adversaries. It is you who have light heartedly furnished the proof or the argument of the worst accusations that have been brought against you, just as your official agencies, under the stupid illusion of terrorising us, have been the first to launch emphatic recitals of your most sinister devastations. It is you, who when the most impartial of your adversaries were obliged, in fairness to limit the responsibility of these acts to a few of your leaders and armies, have angrily claimed your share. It is you who the day after the destruction of Rheims, which, in your inmost hearts, should have dismayed the best amongst you, have boasted of it in imbecile pride, instead of trying to clear yourselves![1] It is you wretched creatures, you representatives of the spirit, who have not ceased to extol force and to

[1] As one of these 'pedants of barbarism' (so Miguel de Unamuno rightly describes them) writes, 'one has the right to destroy, if one has the force to create' (Wer stark ist zu schaffen, der darf auch zerstoren) — Friedr Gundolf *Tat und Wort im Krieg* published in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, October 11th. Cf the article of the aged Hans Thoma, in the *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung* of October 1st

despise the weak, as if you did not know that the wheel of fortune turns, that this force one day will weigh afresh upon you, as in past ages, when your great men, at least, retained the consolation of not having yielded to it the sovereignty of the spirit and the sacred rights of Right!
What reproaches, what remorse are you heaping up for the future, O blind guides—you who are leading into the ditch your nation, which follows you like the stumbling blind men of Brueghel!

What poor arguments you have opposed to us for two months!

1 *War is war*, say you, that is to say without common measure with the rest of things, above morals and reason and all the limits of ordinary life, a kind of supernatural state before which one can only bow without discussion,

2 *Germany is Germany*, that is to say without common measure with the rest of nations. The laws which apply to others do not apply to her, and the rights which she arrogates to herself to violate Right appertain to her alone. Thus she can, without crime, tear up written promises, betray sworn oaths, violate the neutrality of peoples which she has pledged herself to defend. But she claims in return the right to find, in the nations which she outrages,

"chivalrous adversaries," and that they should not be so, that they should dare to defend themselves by all the means and the arms that remain to them, she proclaims a crime!

One recognises there indeed the interested teaching of your Prussian masters! Great minds of Germany, I do not doubt your sincerity, but you are no longer capable of seeing the truth. Prussian Imperialism has crushed down over your eyes and conscience its spiked helmet.

"*Necessity knows no law*." Here is the eleventh commandment, the message that you bring to the universe to-day, sons of Kant! We have heard it more than once in history: it is the famous doctrine of Public Safety, mother of heroisms and crimes. Every nation has recourse to it in the hour of danger, but the greatest are those who defend against it their immortal soul. Fifteen years have passed since the famous trial which saw a single innocent man opposed to the force of the State. Fifteen years have passed since we French affronted and shattered the idol of public safety, when it threatened, as our Péguy says, "the eternal safety of France."

Listen to him, whom you have killed; listen

to a hero of the French conscience, writers who have the keeping of the conscience of Germany.

"*Our enemies of that time*," wrote Charles Péguy, "*spoke the language of the raison* d'État, *of the temporal safety of the people and the race. But we, by a profound Christian movement, by a revolutionary effort at unity with traditional Christianity, aimed at no less than attaining the heights of sacrifice, in our anxiety for the eternal salvation of this people. We did not wish to place France in the position of having committed the unpardonable sin.*"

You do not trouble yourselves about that, thinkers of Germany. You bravely give your blood to save the mortal life but do not bother about the life eternal. It is a terrible moment, I grant. Your fatherland as ours struggles for its life, and I understand and admire the ecstasy of sacrifice which impels your youth, as ours, to make of its body a rampart against death. 'To be or not to be,' do you say? No, that is not enough. To be the great Germany, to be the great France, worthy of their past, and respecting one another even while fighting, that is what I wish. I should blush for victory if my France bought it at the price for which you

will pay for your temporary success Even while the battles are being fought upon the plains of Belgium and amongst the chalky slopes of Champagne, another war is taking place upon the field of the spirit, and often victory below means defeat above. The conquest of Belgium, Malines, Louvain and Rheims, the carillons of Flanders, will sound a sadder knell in your history than the bells of Jena and the conquered Belgians have robbed you of your glory You know it You are enraged because you know it What is the good of vainly trying to deceive yourselves? Truth will be clear to you in the end You have done your best to silence her—one day she will speak, she will speak by the mouth of one of your own in whom will be awakened the conscience of your race Oh, that he may soon appear and that we may hear his voice —the pure and noble voice of the redeemer who shall set you free! He who has lived in the intimacy of your old Germany, who has clasped her hand in the twisted streets of her heroic and sordid past, who has caught the breath of her centuries of trials and shames, remembers and waits, for he knows that even if she has never proved strong enough to bear victory without faltering, it is in her hours of trouble

that she reforms herself, and her greatest geniuses are sons of sorrow

September 1914

Since these lines were written I have watched the birth of the anxiety which little by little is making its way into the consciences of the good people of Germany First a secret doubt, kept under by a stubborn effort to believe the bad arguments collected by their Government to oppose it—documents fabricated to prove that Belgium had renounced her neutrality herself, false allegations (in vain repudiated four times by the French Government, by the Commander in-Chief, by the Cardinal and the Archbishop, and by the Mayor of Rheims)—accusing the French of using the Cathedral of Rheims for military purposes Lacking arguments, their system of defence is at times disconcerting in its naivete

"Is it possible, they say, "that we should be accused of wishing to destroy artistic monuments, we, the people above all others who venerate art, in whom is instilled this respect from infancy, who have the greatest number of text books and historical collections of art and the longest list of lectures on æsthetics? Is it

possible to accuse of the most barbarous actions the most humane, the most affectionate, and the most homely of peoples?"

The idea never strikes them that Germany is not constituted by a single race of men, and that besides the obedient masses who are born to obey, to respect the law—all the laws—there is the race which commands, which believes itself above all laws, and which makes and unmakes them in the name of force and necessity (Not)

It is this evil marriage of idealism and German force which leads to these disasters The idealism proves to be a woman, a woman captive who like so many worthy German wives, worships her lord and master, and refuses even to think that he could ever be wrong

It is, however, necessary for the salvation of Germany that she should one day countenance the thought of divorce, or that the wife should have the courage to make her voice heard in the household I know already several who are beginning to champion the rights of the spirit against force Many a German voice has reached us lately in letters protesting against war and deploring with us the injustices which we deplore I will not give their names in order not to compromise them Not very long ago I told the

"Fair"[1] which obstructed Paris that it was not France I say to day to the German Fair, 'You are not the true Germany' There exists another Germany juster and more humane, whose ambition is not to dominate the world by force and guile, but to absorb in peace everything great in the thought of other races, and in return to reflect the harmony With that Germany there is no dispute, we are not her enemies, we are the enemies of those who have almost succeeded in making the world forget that she still lives

October 1914

Edition des *Cahiers Vaudois* 10e cahier, 1914 (Lausanne, C Tarin)

[1] *Jean Christophe* part v La Foire sur la Place" In vol iii of the English version —TRANS

III

ABOVE THE BATTLE

O YOUNG men that shed your blood with so generous a joy for the starving earth! O heroism of the world! What a harvest for destruction to reap under this splendid summer sun! Young men of all nations, brought into conflict by a common ideal making enemies of those who should be brothers, all of you, marching to your death, are dear to me[1] Slavs, hastening to the aid of your race Englishmen fighting for honour and right, intrepid Belgians who dared to oppose the Teutonic colossus, and defend against him the Thermopylae of the West, Germans fighting to defend the philosophy and the birthplace of Kant against the Cossack avalanche, and you, above all, my young compatriots, in whom the generation of heroes of the Revolution lives again, you, who for years have confided your

At the very hour I wrote these lines, Charles Peguy died

dreams to me, and now, on the verge of battle, bid me a sublime farewell

Those years of scepticism and gay frivolity in which we in France grew up are avenged in you, your faith, which is ours, you protect from their poisonous influence, and with you that faith triumphs on the battlefield "A war of revenge" is the cry Yea! revenge indeed, but in no spirit of Chauvinism The revenge of faith against all the egotisms of the senses and of the spirit—the surrender of self to eternal ideas

One of the most powerful of the young French novelists—Corporal X—writes to me —

'What are our lives our books compared with the magnitude of the aim? The war of the Revolution against feudalism is beginning anew The armies of the Republic will secure the triumph of democracy in Europe and complete the work of the Convention We are fighting for more than our hearths and homes for the awakening of liberty' Another of these young people of noble spirit and pure heart who will be, if he lives the first art critic of our time—Lieutenant X —

"My friend, could you see our Army as I do, you would be thrilled with admiration for our people, for this noble race An enthusiasm, like an outburst of Marseillaise, thrills them, heroic, earnest, and even religious I have seen the three divisions of my army corps set out, the men of active service first young men of twenty marching with firm and rapid steps, without a cry, without a gesture like the ephebi of old calmly going to sacrifice After them

come the reserve men of twenty five to thirty years, more stalwart and more determined who will reinforce the younger men and make them irresistible We, the old men of forty, the fathers of families, are the base of the choir and we too, I assure you, set out confidently resolute and unwavering I have no wish to die but I can die now without regret for I have lived through a fortnight, which would be cheap at the price of death a fortnight which I had not dared to ask of fate History will tell of us, for we are opening a new era in the world We are dispelling the nightmare of the materialism of a mailed Germany and of armed peace It will fade like a phantom before us; the world seems to breathe again Reassure your Viennese friend France is not about to die it is her resurrection which we see For throughout history —Bouvines the Crusades Cathedrals the Revolution—we remain the same the knights errant of the world the paladins of God I have lived long enough to see it fulfilled and we who prophesied it twenty years ago to unbelieving ears may rejoice to day '

O my friends may nothing mar your joy! Whatever fate has in store, you have risen to the pinnacle of earthly life and borne your country with you And you will be victorious Your self sacrifice, your courage, your whole-hearted faith in your sacred cause, and the unshaken certainty that, in defending your invaded

Alludes to a Viennese writer who had told me, a few weeks before the declaration of war that a disaster for France would be a disaster for the liberal thinkers of Germany too

country, you are defending the liberty of the world—all this assures me of your victory, young armies of the Marne and Meuse, whose names are graven henceforth in history by the side of your elders of the Great Republic Yet even had misfortune decreed that you should be van quished, and with you France itself, no people could have aspired to a more noble death It would have crowned the life of that great people of the Crusades—it would have been their supreme victory Conquerors or conquered, living or dead, rejoice! As one of you said to me, embracing me on the terrible threshold "A splendid thing it is to fight with clean hands and a pure heart, and to dispense divine justice with one's life"

You are doing your duty, but have others done theirs? Let us be bold and proclaim the truth to the elders of these young men, to their moral guides, to their religious and secular leaders, to the Churches, the great thinkers, the leaders of socialism, these living riches, these treasures of heroism you held in your hands, for what are you squandering them? What ideal have you held up to the devotion of these youths so eager to sacrifice themselves? Their mutual slaughter! A European war! A sacrilegious conflict which shows a maddened Europe ascending its funeral

pyre, and, like Hercules, destroying itself with its own hands!

And thus the three greatest nations of the West the guardians of civilisation, rush headlong to their ruin, calling in to their aid Cossacks, Turks, Japanese, Cingalese, Soudanese, Senegalese, Moroccans, Egyptians, Sikhs and Sepoys—barbarians from the poles and those from the equator, souls and bodies of all colours[1] It is as if the four quarters of the Roman Empire at the time of the Tetrarchy had called upon the barbarians of the whole universe to devour each other

Is our civilisation so solid that you do not fear to shake the pillars on which it rests? Can you not see that all falls in upon you if one column be shattered? Could you not have learned if not to love one another, at least to tolerate the great virtues and the great vices of the other? Was it not your duty to attempt—you have never attempted it in sincerity—to settle amicably the questions which divided you—the problem of peoples annexed against their will, the equitable division of productive labour and the riches of the world? Must the stronger for ever darken the others with the shadow of his pride, and the others for ever unite to dissipate it? Is there no

[1] See note, p 193

end to this bloody and puerile sport in which the partners change about from century to century—no end until the whole of humanity is exhausted thereby?

The rulers who are the criminal authors of these wars dare not accept the responsibility for them. Each one by underhand means seeks to lay the blame at the door of his adversary. The peoples who obey them submissively resign themselves with the thought that a power higher than mankind has ordered it thus. Again the venerable refrain is heard: 'The fatality of war is stronger than our wills.' The old refrain of the herd that makes a god of its feebleness and bows down before him. Man has invented fate, that he may make it responsible for the disorders of the universe, those disorders which it was his duty to regulate. There is no fatality! The only fatality is what we desire, and more often too what we do not desire enough. Let each now repeat his *mea culpa*. The leaders of thought, the Church, the Labour Parties did not desire war. . . . That may be. . . . What then did they do to prevent it? What are they doing to put an end to it? They are stirring up the bonfire, each one bringing his faggot.

The most striking feature in this monstrous

epic, the fact without precedent, is the unanimity for war in each of the nations engaged. An epidemic of homicidal fury, which started in Tokio ten years ago, has spread like a wave and overflowed the whole world. None has resisted it; no high thought has succeeded in keeping out of the reach of this scourge. A sort of demoniacal irony broods over this conflict of the nations, from which, whatever its result, only a mutilated Europe can emerge. For it is not racial passion alone which is hurling millions of men blindly one against another, so that not even neutral countries remain free of the dangerous thrill, but all the forces of the spirit, of reason, of faith, of poetry, and of science, all have placed themselves at the disposal of the armies in every state. There is not one amongst the leaders of thought in each country who does not proclaim with conviction that the cause of his people is the cause of God, the cause of liberty and of human progress. And I, too, proclaim it.

Strange combats are being waged between metaphysicians, poets, historians—Eucken against Bergson; Hauptmann against Maeterlinck; Rolland against Hauptmann; Wells against Bernard Shaw. Kipling and D'Annunzio, Dehmel and de

Régnier sing war hymns Barrès and Maeterlinck chant paeans of hatred Between a fugue of Bach and the organ which thunders *Deutschland uber Alles*, Wundt, the aged philosopher of eighty two calls, with his quavering voice, the students of Leipzig to the holy war And each nation hurls at the other the name "Barbarians"

The academy of moral science, in the person of its president Bergson, declares the struggle undertaken against Germany to be "*the struggle of civilisation itself against barbarism* German history replies with the voice of Karl Lamprecht that "*this is a war between Germanism and barbarism, and the present conflict is the logical successor of those against the Huns and Turks in which Germany has been engaged throughout the ages*" Science, following history into the lists, proclaims through E Perrier, director of the Museum, member of the Academy of Sciences, that the Prussians do not belong to the Aryan race, but are descended in direct line from the men of the Stone Age called Allophyles and adds, "*the modern skull resembling by its base, the best index of the strength of the appetites, the skull of the fossilised man in the Chapelle aux Saints most nearly, is none other than that of Prince Bismarck!*"

But the two moral forces whose weakness this contagious war shows up most clearly are Christianity and Socialism These rival apostles of religious and secular internationalism have suddenly developed into the most ardent of nationalists Hervé is eager to die for the standard of Austerlitz The German socialists, pure trustees of the pure doctrine, support the bills of credit for the war in the Reichstag They place themselves at the disposal of the Prussian minister, who uses their journals to spread abroad his lies, even into the barracks, and sends them as secret agents to attempt to pervert Italy It was believed for the honour of their cause for a moment that two or three of them had been shot rather than take arms against their brothers Indignant, they protest, they are all marching under arms! Liebknecht, forsooth, did not die for the cause of socialism,[1] but Frank, the principal champion of the Franco German union, fell under French fire, fighting in the cause of militarism These men have courage to die for the faith of others, they have no courage to die for their own

[1] Liebknecht has since gloriously cleared his honour of the compromises of his party I here express my admiration of his attitude (R R, January 1915)

As for the representatives of the Prince of Peace—priests, pastors, bishops—they go into battle in their thousands, to carry out, musket in hand, the Divine commands *Thou shalt not kill*, and *Love one another* Each bulletin of victory, whether it be German, Austrian, or Russian, gives thanks to the great captain God —*unser alter Gott notre Dieu*—as William II or M Arthur Meyer says For each has his own God and each God whether old or young has his Levites to defend him and destroy the God of the others

Twenty thousand French priests are marching with the colours Jesuits offer their services to the German armies, cardinals issue warlike mandates and the Serb bishops of Hungary incite their faithful flocks to fight against their brothers in Greater Serbia The newspapers report, with no expressions of astonishment the paradoxical scene at the railway station at Pisa, where the Italian socialists cheered the young ordinands who were rejoining their regiments, all singing the Marseillaise together So strong the cyclone that sweeps them all before it so feeble the men it encounters on its career - and I am amongst them

Come, friends! Let us make a stand! Can

we not resist this contagion, whatever its nature and virulence be—whether moral epidemic or cosmic force? Do we not fight against the plague, and strive even to repair the disaster caused by an earthquake? Or must we bow ourselves before it, agreeing with Luzzatti in his famous article[1] that "*In the universal disaster the nations triumph*"? Shall we say with him that it is good and reasonable that "the demon of international war, which mows down thousands of beings should be let loose,' so that the great and simple truth, "love of our country," be understood? It would seem, then, that love of our country can flourish only through the hatred of other countries and the massacre of those who sacrifice themselves in the defence of them There is in this theory a ferocious absurdity, a neronian dilettantism which repels me to the very depths of my being No! Love of my country does not demand that I shall hate and slay those noble and faithful souls who also love theirs, but rather that I should honour them and seek to unite with them for our common good.

You Christians will say—and in this you seek consolation for having betrayed your Master's

[1] Recently published in the *Corriere della Sera* and translated by the *Journal de Genève*, September 1914

orders—that war exalts the virtue of sacrifice And it is true that war has the privilege of bringing out the genius of the race in the most commonplace of hearts It purges away, in its bath of blood, all dross and impurity, it tempers the metal of the soul, of a niggardly peasant, of a timorous citizen it can make a hero of Valmy. But is there no better employment for the devotion of one people than the devastation of another? Can we not sacrifice ourselves without sacrificing our neighbours also? I know well, poor souls, that many of you are more willing to offer your blood than to spill that of others But what a fundamental weakness! Confess, then, that you who are undismayed by bullets and shrapnel yet tremble before the dictates of racial frenzy—that Moloch that stands higher than the Church of Christ—the jealous pride of race You Christians of to-day would not have refused to sacrifice to the gods of Imperial Rome, you are not capable of such courage! Your Pope Pius X died of grief to see the outbreak of this war—so it is said And not without reason The Jupiter of the Vatican who hurled thunderbolts upon those inoffensive priests who believed in the noble chimera of modernism—what did he do against those princes

and those criminal rulers whose measureless ambition has given the world over to misery and death? May God inspire the new Pontiff who has just ascended the throne of St Peter with words and deeds which will cleanse the Church from the stain of this silence.

As for you socialists who on both sides claim to be defending liberty against tyranny—French liberty against the Kaiser, German liberty against the Tsar, is it a question of defending one despotism against another? Unite and attack both.

There was no reason for war between the Western nations, French, English, and German we are all brothers and do not hate one another The war-preaching press is envenomed by a minority, a minority vitally interested in maintaining these hatreds, but our peoples, I know, ask for peace and liberty and that alone The real tragedy, to one situated in the midst of the conflict and able to look down from the high plateaus of Switzerland into all the hostile camps, is the patent fact that actually each of the nations is being menaced in its dearest possessions—in its honour, its independence, its life. Who has brought these plagues upon them? brought them to the desperate alternative of overwhelming their adversary or dying? None other

than their governments, and above all in my opinion, the three great culprits, the three rapacious eagles, the three empires the tortuous policy of the house of Austria the ravenous greed of Tsarism, the brutality of Prussia The worst enemy of each nation is not without, but within its frontiers, and none has the courage to fight against it It is the monster of a hundred heads, the monster named Imperialism, the will to pride and domination, which seeks to absorb all or subdue all, or break all, and will suffer no greatness except itself For the Western nations Prussian imperialism is the most dangerous Its hand uplifted in menace against Europe has forced us to join in arms against the outcome of a military and feudal caste, which is the curse not only of the rest of the world but also of Germany itself, whose thought it has subtly poisoned We must destroy this first but not this alone, the Russian autocracy too will have its turn Every nation to a greater or less extent has an imperialism of its own, and whether it be military financial feudal republican, social, or intellectual it is always the octopus sucking the best blood of Europe Let the free men of all the countries of Europe when this war is over take up again the motto of Voltaire "*Ecrasons l'infâme!*"

When the war is over! The evil is done now, the torrent let loose and we cannot force it back into its channel unaided Moreover crimes have been committed against right attacks on the liberties of peoples and on the sacred treasuries of thought, which must and will be expiated Europe cannot pass over unheeded the violenc done to the noble Belgian people, the devastatior of Malines and Louvain, sacked by modern Tillys

But in the name of heaven let not these crimes be expiated by similar crimes! Let not the hideous words "vengeance" and "retaliation" be heard, for a great nation does not revenge itself, it re establishes justice But let those in whose hands lies the execution of justice show themselves worthy of her to the end.

It is our duty to keep this before them, nor will we be passive and wait for the fury of this conflict to spend itself Such conduct would be unworthy of us who have such a task before us

Our first duty, then, all over the world, is to insist on the formation of a moral High Court, a tribunal of consciences, to watch and pass impartial judgment on any violations of the laws of nations. And since committees of inquiry formed by belligerents themselves would

be always suspect, the neutral countries of the old and new world must take the initiative, and form a tribunal such as was suggested by Mr Prenant,[1] professor of medicine at Paris and taken up enthusiastically by M Paul Seippel in the *Journal de Geneve*[2]

"They should produce men of some worldly authority, and of proved civic morality to act as a commission of inquiry, and to follow the armies at a little distance Such an organisation would complete and solidify the Hague Court, and prepare indisputable documents for the necessary work of justice"

The neutral countries are too much effaced Confronted by unbridled force they are inclined to believe that opinion is defeated in advance, and the majority of thinkers in all countries share their pessimism There is a lack of courage here as well as of clear thinking For just at this time the power of opinion is immense The most despotic of governments, even though marching to victory, trembles before public opinion and seeks to court it Nothing shows this more clearly than the efforts of both parties

[1] *Le Temps*, September 4, 1914

[2] Issues of September 16 and 17, 1914 *La Guerre et le Droit*

engaged in war, of their ministers, chancellors, sovereigns, of the Kaiser himself turned journalist, to justify their own crimes, and denounce the crimes of their adversary at the invisible tribunal of humanity. Let this invisible tribunal be seen at last, let us venture to constitute it. Ye know not your moral power, O ye of little faith! If there be a risk, will you not take it for the honour of humanity? What is the value of life when you have saved it at the price of all that is worth living for?

Et propter vitam, vivendi perdere causas.

But for us, the artists and poets, priests and thinkers of all countries, remains another task. Even in time of war it remains a crime for finer spirits to compromise the integrity of their thought; it is shameful to see it serving the passion of a puerile, monstrous policy of race, a policy scientifically absurd—since no country possesses a race wholly pure. Such a policy, as Renan points out in his beautiful letter to Strauss,[1] "*can only lead to zoological wars, wars of extermination similar to those in which various species of rodents and carnivorous beasts fight for their existence. This would be the end of*

[1] Letter dated September 15, 1871, published in *Réforme intellectuelle et morale.*

that fertile admixture called humanity, composed as it is of such various necessary elements ' Humanity is a symphony of great collective souls, and he who understands and loves it only by destroying a part of those elements proves himself a barbarian and shows his idea of harmony to be no better than the idea of order another held in Warsaw

For the finer spirits of Europe there are two dwelling places our earthly fatherland, and that other City of God Of the one we are the guests of the other the builders To the one let us give our lives and our faithful hearts, but neither family, friend nor fatherland, nor aught that we love has power over the spirit The spirit is the light It is our duty to lift it above tempests and thrust aside the clouds which threaten to obscure it, to build higher and stronger, dominating the injustice and hatred of nations, the walls of that city wherein the souls of the whole world may assemble

I feel here how the generous heart of Switzerland is thrilled, divided between sympathies for the various nations, and lamenting that it cannot choose freely between them, nor even express them I understand its torment, but I know that this is salutary I hope it will rise

thence to that superior joy of a harmony of races, which may be a noble example for the rest of Europe It is the duty of Switzerland now to stand in the midst of the tempest, like an island of justice and of peace, where, as in the great monasteries of the early Middle Ages, the spirit may find a refuge from unbridled force, where the fainting swimmers of all nations, those who are weary of hatred, may persist, in spite of all the wrongs they have seen and suffered, in loving all men as their brothers.

I know that such thoughts have little chance of being heard to day Young Europe, burning with the fever of battle will smile with disdain and show its fangs like a young wolf But when the access of fever has spent itself, wounded and less proud of it voracious heroism, it will come to itself again

Moreover I do not speak to convince it I speak but to solace my conscience and I know that at the same time I shall solace the hearts of thousands of others who, in all countries, cannot or dare not speak themselves

Journal de Genève, September 15, 1914

IV

THE LESSER OF TWO EVILS
PANGERMANISM, PANSLAVISM

I do not hold the doctrine expounded by a certain saintly king, that it is useless to enter into discussion with heretics—and we regard all those who do not agree with our opinions as heretics nowadays—but that it is sufficient to brain them I feel the need of understanding my enemy's reasons I am unwilling to believe in unfairness Doubtless my enemy is as passionately sincere as I am Why, then, should we not attempt to understand each other? For such an understanding, though it will not suppress the conflict may perhaps suppress our hatred, and it is hatred more than anything else that I regard as my enemy

However much I may feel that the motives actuating the various combatants are not equally worthy, I have yet come to the conviction, after

reading the papers and letters which, during the last two months, have arrived in Geneva from every country, that the ardour of patriotic faith is everywhere the same, and that each of the nations engaged in this mighty struggle believes itself to be the champion of liberty against barbarism But liberty and barbarism do not mean the same thing to both sides

Barbarous despotism, the worst enemy to liberty, is exemplified for us Frenchmen, English men, men of the West, in Prussian Imperialism, and I venture to think that the register of its methods is plainly set forth in the devastated route from Liége to Senlis, passing by way of Louvain, Malines, and Rheims For Germany, the monster (" *Ungeheuer*,' as the aged Wundt calls it) which threatens civilisation is Russia, and the bitterest reproach which the Germans hurl against France is our alliance with the Empire of the Tsar I have received many letters reproaching us with this In the Munich review, *Das Forum*, I read only yesterday an article by Wilhelm Herzog challenging me to explain my position with regard to Russia Let us consider the question, then I ask nothing better By this means we shall be able to weigh the German danger and the Russian

danger in the balance, and thus show which of the two seems the more threatening to us

Of the actual events of the present war between Germany and Russia I will say nothing All the information we have comes from Russian or German sources, equally unreliable To judge by them it would appear that the same ferocity exists in both camps The Germans in Kalish were worthy companions of the Cossacks in Grodtken and Zorothowo—It is of the German spirit and of the Russian spirit that I wish to speak here, for this is the important thing and of this we have more definite knowledge

You, my German friends—for those of you who were my friends in the past remain my friends in spite of fanatical demands from both sides that we should break off all relations—know how much I love the Germany of the past and all that I owe to it Not less than you, yourselves, I am the son of Beethoven, of Leibnitz, and of Goethe But what do I owe to the Germany of to day or what does Europe owe to it? What art have you produced since the monumental work of Wagner, which marks the end of an epoch and belongs to the past? What new and original thought can you boast

of since the death of Nietzsche, whose magnificent madness has left its traces upon you though we are unscathed by it? Where have we sought our spiritual food for the last forty years, when our own fertile soil no longer yielded sufficient for our needs? Who but the Russian writers have been our guides? What German writer can you set up against Tolstoi and Dostoievsky, those giants of poetic genius and moral grandeur? These are the men who have moulded my soul, and in defending the nation from which they sprang, I am but paying a debt which I owe to that nation as well as to themselves Even if the contempt for Prussian Imperialism were not innate to me as a Latin, I should have learned it from them Twenty years ago Tolstoi expressed his contempt for your Kaiser In music, Germany, so proud of its ancient glory, has only the successors of Wagner, neurotic jugglers with orchestral effects, like Richard Strauss, but not a single sober and virile work of the quality of *Boris Godunov* No German musician has opened up new roads A single page of Moussorgsky or Strawinsky shows more originality more potential greatness than the complete scores of Mahler and Reger In our Universities, in our hospitals and Pasteur Insti-

tutes, Russian students and scholars work side by side with our own, and Russian revolutionaries who have taken refuge in Paris mingle their aspirations with those of our socialists

The crimes of Tsarism are continually on your lips We, too, denounce these crimes, for Tsarism is our enemy, and what I wrote but recently, I repeat now But it is likewise the enemy of the intellectual élite of Russia itself This cannot be said of your intellectuals, who are so slavishly obedient to the commands of your rulers A few days ago I received that amazing "Address to the Civilised Nations" with which the Imperial army corps of German intellectuals bombarded Europe, meanwhile the army corps of German Commerce (*Bureau des Deutschen Handelstages*) shelled the markets of the world with circulars ornamented by the figure of Mercury the god of lies This mobilisation of the forces of the pen and of the caduceus, with which in good truth no other country could compete, has given us additional reason to fear the Empire's powers of organisation no reason to respect it more Civilised Nations read, not without amazement, that Address the truth of which was vouched for by the names of the most distinguished scientists, thinkers, and artists in

Germany—by Behring, Ostwald, Roentgen, Eucken, Haeckel, Wundt, Dehmel, Hauptmann, Sudermann, Hildebrand, Klinger, Liebermann, Humperdinck, Weingartner, etc—by painters and philosophers, musicians theologians chemists, economists, poets, and the professors of twenty universities They learned, not without surprise, that "it is not true that Germany provoked the war,—it is not true that Germany criminally violated the neutrality of Belgium,—it is not true that Germany used violence against the life or the belongings of a single Belgian citizen without being forced to do so—it is not true that Germany destroyed Louvain (destroyed it? no indeed, she saved it!),—it is not true that Germany——" It is not true that day is day and night is night! I confess that I could not read to the end without that feeling of embarrassment which I felt as a child, when I heard an elderly man whom I respected make false statements I turned aside my eyes and blushed for him Thank God! the crimes of Tsarism never found a defender amongst the great artists scholars, and thinkers of Russia Are not Kropotkin, Tolstoi, Dostoievski, and Gorki, the greatest names in its literature, the very ones who denounced its crimes!

Russian domination has often been cruelly heavy for the smaller nationalities which it has swallowed up. But how comes it then Germans that the Poles prefer it to yours? Do you imagine that Europe is ignorant of the monstrous way in which you are exterminating the Polish race? Do you think that we do not receive the confidences of those Baltic nations who, having to choose between two conquerors, prefer the Russian because he is the more humane? Read the following letter which I received but lately from a Lett, who, though he has suffered severely at the hands of the Russians, yet sides ardently with them against you. My German friends, you are either strangely ignorant of the state of mind of the nations which surround you, or you think us extremely simple and ill informed. Your imperialism, beneath its veneer of civilisation, seems to me no less ferocious than Tsarism towards everything that ventures to oppose its avaricious desire for universal dominion. But whereas immense and mysterious Russia over flowing with young and revolutionary forces, gives us hope of a coming renewal, your Germany bases its systematic harshness on a culture too antiquated and scholastic to allow of any hope of amendment. If I had any such hope—and I once

had it, my friends—you have taken great pains to rob me of it, you, artists and scholars, who drew up that address in which you pride yourselves on your complete unity with Prussian Imperialism Know once for all that there is nothing more over whelming for us Latins, nothing more difficult to endure, than your militarisation of the intellect If by some awful fate, this spirit were triumphant, I should leave Europe for ever To live here would be intolerable to me

Here then, are some extracts from the interesting letter which I have received from a representative of those little nationalities which are being disputed between Russia and Germany They desire to maintain their independence, but find themselves obliged to choose between these two nations, and choose Russia It is good to hear them speak We are too much inclined to listen only to the Great Powers who are now at war Let us think of those little barques which the great vessels draw in their wake Let us share for a moment the agony with which these little nationalities, forgotten by the egotism of Europe, await the final issue of a struggle which will decide their fate Let England and France heed those beseeching eyes which are turned towards them, let young Russia, herself so eager

for liberty, help generously to shed its benefits abroad

October 10, 1914

LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

30th September, 1914

SIR,—I desire to thank you for your article, "Above the Battle" Although by my education I am more akin to the civilisations of Germany and Russia than to the civilisation of France, yet I respect the French spirit more, for I am convinced more than ever to day, that it will furnish the greatly needed solution of the problems of national rights and liberty

In your article you quote the words of one of your friends, a soldier and a writer, who says that the French are fighting not only to defend their own country but to save the *liberty of the world* You can hardly imagine how such words re echo in the hearts of oppressed nations, what streams of sympathy are to day converging from all corners of Europe upon France, what hopes depend upon your victory

And yet many doubts have been expressed with regard to these French and English assertions because both nations have allied them-

selves with Russia, whose policy is contrary to the ideas of right and liberty, and Germany herself maintains that it is precisely those ideas for which she is fighting against Russia.

It would be interesting to discover what German writers and professors really mean when they speak of a Holy War against Russia Do they wish to assist Russian revolutionaries to dethrone the Tsar?—Every revolutionary party would refuse indignantly to accept assistance from Prussian militarism Do they wish to set free the neighbouring countries, such as Poland, which are oppressed by Russia, by incorporating them with the German Empire?—It is well known that the Poles who are German subjects have suffered much more ignoble treatment than the Russian Poles, though even they have every reason to complain

The Baltic provinces of Russia alone remain, and here the Germans have for centuries had their pioneers among the large landowners and the merchants in the bigger towns These, no doubt, Russian subjects but of German nationality, would welcome the German armies with enthusiasm But they form only a caste of nobles and of the wealthy middle classes, numbering at most a few thousands, whereas the bulk of the population, the

Lettish and Esthonian nations, would regard the absorption of these provinces into Germany as the worst of calamities We know well what German domination means I am a Lett and can speak with authority for I know the deepest feelings and hopes of my own countrymen

The Letts are akin to the Lithuanians They inhabit Courland, Livonia, and a part of the province of Vitebsk Their intellectual centre is Riga There are colonies of them in all the principal towns of Russia Last year the *Annales des Nationalites* of Paris devoted two numbers to these two sister nations Owing to the geographical situation of their country, which is only too desirable, they had the misfortune to be under the yoke of the Germans, before they were under the yoke of the Russians To understand how much they suffered under the former it will be sufficient to say that in comparison with the Germans, we think of the Russians as our liberators By sheer force the Germans kept us for centuries in a state equivalent to slavery Only fifty years ago the Russian Government set us free from this bondage, but, at the same time, it committed the grave injustice of leaving all our land in the hands of German proprietors Nevertheless, within the last twenty or thirty

years, we have succeeded in reclaiming from the Germans a part at least of our land, and in reaching a considerable level of culture, thanks to which, we are considered, together with the Esthonians and the Finns, as the most advanced people in the Russian Empire

German papers often accuse us of ingratitude, and reproach us with our lack of appreciation of the advantages of the culture which they boast of having brought us We listen to such accusations with a bitter smile and in writing the word *Kulturtrager* (bearer of civilisation) add an exclamation mark afterwards, for the behaviour of the Germans has brought the expression into contempt We have acquired our culture in spite of their opposition, and against their will *Even to day it is the German representatives in the Russian Duma who veto the occasional suggestions on the part of the Government to make reforms in the Baltic provinces* These provinces are administered in a manner that differs, and differs for the worse, from that adopted in the other provinces of Russia We still submit to laws and regulations which no longer exist in other parts of Europe—laws which were made in the feudal ages and have been rigorously maintained amongst us, thanks to the exertions of the big

German landowners who are always sure of a hearing at the Imperial Court of St Petersburg

Formerly, when we were striving in vain to reconcile our sympathy and admiration for German thought and art with the narrow, haughty and cruel spirit of its representatives amongst us, we explained it all by saying that the Germans in our provinces were of a peculiar type, and had little in common with other Germans But the crimes of which they have been guilty in Belgium and in France show us our mistake Germans are the same everywhere in the work of conquest and domination—wholly without humanitarian scruples In Germany, as in Russia there are two distinct tendencies—the one, provoked by the ideas of Pangermanism and Panslavism, is to seek national glory on the field of battle and in the oppression of the personalities of other nations, the other is to achieve the same end in the peaceful realms of thought and artistic creation Just as the culture of which Goethe was typical has nothing in common with Prussian militarism so Tolstoi may be considered as the representative of that other Russia which is so different from the one represented by the Russian Government of to-day Certainly the gulf between these two tendencies is less deep

in Germany than in Russia, and this is due to the immense size of Russia, which contains vast numbers of poor and ignorant human beings whom the Russian Government oppresses with the utmost brutality *But it is entirely unjust always to allude to the Russians as barbarians, and the Germans who invariably make use of this word when they speak of Russia have less right than any one to do so* No one who knows the intellectual world of Germany and Russia will venture to say that the former is much superior to the latter—they are simply different *And I would add that the one fact which makes us feel more drawn to the intellectual world of Russia than to that of the Germany of to-day is that it would never be capable of justifying and approving the brutal conduct of its Government as the German intellectuals are doing now It has often been constrained to keep silence, but it has never raised its voice in defence of a guilty Government*

Let not my testimony in favour of the Russians lead any one to believe that I am idealising them, or that my people, the Letts, have enjoyed any special privileges under their government On the contrary! I have suffered more at their hands than at the hands of the Germans, and my nation knows only too well how heavy is the hand of

the Russian Government, and how suffocating the atmosphere of Panslavism In 1906 it was the Lett peasant and intellectual classes who enjoyed most frequently the privilege of being flogged, it was amongst these classes that the greatest number of unfortunates were shot, hanged, or imprisoned for life And since that dreadful year there are to be found in all the principal towns of Western Europe colonies of Letts, formed of refugees who succeeded in escaping from the atrocities of the punitive expedition sent by the Russian Go ernment against my country. But this fact is significant *at the head of the majority of the military bands commissioned to punish the country were German officers who had asked for this employment, and showed so great a zeal in shooting down men and setting fire to houses, that they went even beyond the intentions of the Russian Government In those days the places might count themselves fortunate which were visited by dragoons commanded by officers of Russian nationality for where Russian officers would have ordered the knout, German officers habitually inflicted a sentence of death*

If my nation had ever to choose between a German and a Russian government t would choose the latter as the lesser of two evils I see in the

Lett newspapers that the reservists of my country left for the war with enthusiasm I do not imagine that this enthusiasm is due to the thought that they are fighting for the glory of a nation which, by every means in its power, seeks to hinder our national development, by forbidding instruction in our native tongue in primary schools, by attempting to colonise our land with Russian peasants, by compelling our own people to emigrate to Siberia and America by excluding all Letts from any share in Government employment, etc. This enthusiasm nevertheless exists, and it is because the war is being waged against Germany, and because the Letts know that the Germans have long been aiming at the possession of the Baltic provinces To prevent this we are prepared to make any sacrifice We, who love our national civilisation and know well what Panslavism and Pangermanism mean, are of opinion that, of the two, Panslavism is less fatal to the civilisations of small nations This is really due to the character of the two races

German oppression is always systematic, hence always efficacious In addition to this, their arrogant contempt for everything that is not themselves, the calm and calculated method in which they carry

out their system of persecution wherever they dominate all this makes them intolerable

Russians are less logical by nature their minds are not so regulated and they are more inclined to obey the dictates of their hearts for this reason they are less to be feared as oppressors The blows which they strike are often extremely cruel and painful but they can repent from time to time Their manners are rougher and more brutal (I speak here more especially of civil and military officials) *but on the whole they are more humane than the Germans who often conceal feelings of fierce savagery under the mask of perfect courtesy In the year 1906, when there were executions in Russia on a large scale there were many cases of suicide amongst Russian officers who could not reconcile their profession of soldiers with that of a hangman The officers of German nationality on the other hand, carried out their orders with enjoyment*

Nevertheless, Russian domination, though preferable to German, is still very oppressive I hear the news of Russian victories with mingled feelings, rejoicing in so far as they are victories for the Allies yet dreading the triumph of Russia After the defeats of the Russo Japanese War when the Russian Government was weak

ened it conceded certain liberal measures and then revoked them almost entirely as its strength returned What have we to expect from a victory for Tsarism, especially we, who are not Russians, but a savage revival of the crushing ideals of Panslavism?

This is the agonised question which the nations subject to Russia are asking now I read in your article that the turn of Tsarism will come after that of Prussianism In what sense is this to be understood? Is it your opinion that another war will presently break out against Tsarism or will it be struck down by the blows of an internal revolution? Is it even possible that France and England obtained the promise of a reform in the internal politics of Russia before allying themselves with her? And is the proclamation to the Poles evidence of this? Will it have any real effect after the war? And those other nations oppressed by Russia—the Finns the Letts, the Lithuanians, the Esthonians, the Armenians, the Jews —will they too have justice done them?

These questions are probably devoid of any political significance Yet without perceiving in what manner France and England can set us free, we do direct our hopes towards them We

believe that in some way or other they will take care in future that their Russian ally shall show herself worthy of them and of the ideas for which they are fighting, lest the blood of those who have died in the cause of freedom go to feed the strength of the oppressors

Thus, sir, I have ventured uninvited to set forth rather fully to you the hopes and fears of a nation which has developed itself on a narrow strip of land between the two abysses of Pan-germanism and Panslavism Whilst ardently desiring the destruction of the former, we have everything to fear from the latter Yet we do not aspire to political independence We seek only the possibility of developing freely our intellectual, artistic, and economic powers, without the perpetual menace of being absorbed by Russia or Germany We believe that, in virtue of the civilisation we have acquired in the face of obstacles, we are worthy of the liberties and rights of man, we are convinced that as a nation we have qualities which will fit us to play a valuable part in the great symphony of civilised peoples

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V

INTER ARMA CARITAS

ONCE more I address myself to our friends the enemy. But this time I shall attempt no discussion, for discussion is impossible with those who avow that they do not seek for but possess the truth. For the moment there is no spiritual force that can pierce the thick wall of certitude by which Germany is barricaded against the light of day—the terrible certitude, the pharisaical satisfaction which pervades the monstrous letter of a Court preacher who glorifies God for having made him impeccable, irreproachable, and pure, himself, his emperor, his ministers, his army, and his race; and who rejoices beforehand in his "holy wrath" at the destruction of all who do not think as he thinks.[1]

[1] Open letter of Dr. Ernst Dryander, the First Court Preacher and Vice President of the Higher Ecclesiastical Council, to C. E. Babut, Pastor of Nimes, September 15, 1914 (published in *l'Essor* for the 10th October and the *Journal de Genève*, 18th October).

True I am very far from thinking that this monument of anti Christian pride represents the spirit of the better part of Germany I know how many noble hearts, moderate, affectionate incapable of doing evil and almost of conceiving it, go to make up her moral strength , amongst them are friends that I shall never cease to esteem I know how many intrepid minds work ceaselessly in German science for the conquest of the truth But I see on the one hand these good people so over confident, so tractable, with their eyes shut ignorant of the facts and unwilling to recognise anything but what it is the pleasure of their Government that they shall know , and on the other, the clearest minds of Germany, historians and savants, trained for the criticism of texts basing their conviction on documents which all emanate from one alone of the parties concerned, and by way of peremptory proof referring us to the *ex parte* affirmations of their Emperor and of their Chancellor like well behaved scholars, whose only argument is *Magister dixit* What hope remains of convincing such people that there exists a truth beyond that master and that in addition to his White Book we have in our hands books of every kind and of every colour, whose testimony demands the attention of an impartial

judge? But do they so much as know of their existence, and does the master allow his class to handle the manuals of his enemies? Our disagreement is not only as regards the facts of the case, it is due to difference in mind itself. Between the spirit of Germany to day and that of the rest of Europe there is no longer a point of contact We speak to them of *Humanity*, they reply with *Uebermensch*, *Uebervolk*, and it goes without saying that they themselves are the Uebervolk Germany seems to be overcome by a morbid exaltation, a collective madness, for which there is no remedy but time According to the view of medical experts in analogous cases such forms of madness develop rapidly, and are suddenly followed by profound depression We can then but wait and in the meantime defend ourselves to the best of our ability from the madness of Ajax

Certainly Ajax has given us plenty of work to do Look at the ruins around us! We may bring aid to the victims—yet how little can we achieve? In the eternal struggle between good and evil the scales are not evenly balanced We need a century to re create what one day can destroy The fury of madness, on the other hand, endures only for a day, patient labour is our lot

throughout the years It knows no pause, even in those hours when the world seems at an end The vine growers of Champagne gather in their vintage though the bombs of the rival armies explode around them—and we, too, can do our share! There is work for all who find themselves outside the battle Especially for those who still can write it seems to me that there should be something better to do than to brandish a pen dipped in blood and seated at their tables to cry "Kill! Kill!" I hate the war but even more do I hate those who glorify it without taking part What would we say of officers who marched behind their men? The noblest role of those who follow in the rear is to pick up their friends who fall, and to bear in mind even during the battle those fair words so often forgotten—*Inter Arma Caritas*

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Amidst all the misery which every man of feeling can do his share to relieve, let us recall the fate of the prisoner of war But knowing that Germany to day blushes at her former sentimentality, I carefully refrain from appealing to her pity by whinings, as they call them, about the destruction of Louvain and Rheims "War is war" Granted!—then it is natural that it drags

in its train thousands of prisoners, officers and men

For the moment I shall say only a word about these, in order to comfort as far as possible the families who are searching for them, and are so anxious about their fate On both sides hateful rumours circulate only too easily, rumours given currency by an unscrupulous press rumours which would have us believe that the most elementary laws of humanity are trampled under foot by the enemy Only the other day an Austrian friend wrote to me, maddened by the lies of some paper or other, to beg me to help the German wounded in France, who are left without any aid And have I not heard or read the same unworthy fears expressed by Frenchmen as regards their wounded who are said to be maltreated in Germany? But it is all a lie—on both sides, and those of us whose task it is to receive the true information from either camp must affirm the contrary Speaking generally (for in so many thousands of cases one cannot of course, be sure that there will not here and there be individual exceptions) this war, whose actual conduct has provoked a degree of harshness which our knowledge of previous wars in the West would not have allowed us to expect, is by contrast less cruel to

all those—prisoners and wounded—who are put out of the battle line

The letters that we receive and documents already published—especially an interesting account which appeared in the *Neue Zurcher Zeitung* of October 18th, written by Dr Schneeli, who had just been visiting the hospitals and prisoners camps in Germany, show that in that country efforts are being made to reconcile the ideals of humanity with the exigencie of war They make it clear that there is no difference between the care bestowed by the Germans on their own wounded and those of the enemy, and that friendly relations exist between the prisoners and their guards, who all share the same food

I could wish that similar inquiry might be made and published on the camps where German prisoners are concentrated in France In the meantime accounts which reach me from individuals disclose a similar situation,[1] and there is

[1] The newspapers of both countries give publicity only to prejudiced stories unfavourable to the enemy One would imagine that they devote themselves to collecting only the worst cases, in order to preserve the atmosphere of hatred and those to which they give predominance are often doubtful and always exceptional No mention is made of anything that would tell in a contrary direction of prisoners who are grateful for their treatment, as in the letters which

plenty of reliable evidence that in Germany and France alike the wounded of both countries are living in terms of friendship There are even soldiers who refuse to have their wounds dressed or receive their rations before their [illegible] the enemy have received simil[illegible] and who knows if it is not perha[illegible] of the contending armies that th[illegible] national [illegible] are least violent? [illegible] one [illegible] to appreciate the courage of [illegible] adver[illegible]s, since the same sufferings are common [illegible] all, and sin[illegible] where all energy is directed towards action there is none left for personal animosity It is amongst those who are not actively engaged [illegible]re is developed the harsh and impla[illegible]and [illegible] hatred of which certain [illegible] provide terrible examples

The moral situation of the military prisoner is therefore not so overwhelming as might be imagined, and his lot, sad as it is, is less to be pitied than that of another class of prisoners of

we have to transmit to their families—in which, for example, a German civil prisoner speaks of a pleasant walk [illegible] of sea bathing, he has been allowed to enjoy I have even come across the case of an entomologist who is peacefully absorbed in his researches, and profiting by his enforced sojourn in the South of France to complete his collection of insects

whom I shall speak later The feeling of duty accomplished, the memory of the struggle, glorifies his misfortune in his own eyes, and even in those of the enemy He is not totally abandoned to the foe, international conventions protect him, the Red Cross watches over him, and it is possible to discover where he is and to come to his assistance

In this work the admirable *Agence internationale des prisonniers de guerre*, most providentially established some two months after the commencement of the war, has caused the name of Geneva to be known and blessed in the most remote corners of France and Germany It only needs, like Providence itself, to gain the co operation of those over whose interests it watches, that is to say, of the States concerned which have been somewhat slow in supplying the lists we need Under the ægis of the International Committee of the Red Cross, with M Gustave Ador as president and M Max Dollfus as director, some 300 voluntary workers, drawn from all classes of society, are assisting in its charitable work More than 15,000 letters a day pass through its hands It daily transmits about 7,000 letters between prisoners and their families, and is responsible for the safe

dispatch of some 4,000 francs on an average The precise information which it is able to communicate was very meagre at the start, but soon increased, until a thousand cases could be dealt with in the course of a single day, and this number rapidly increased with the arrival of more complete lists from the Governments concerned

This renewal of intercourse between a prisoner and his family is not the only beneficial result of our organisation Its peaceful work, its impartial knowledge of the actual facts in the belligerent countries, contribute to modify the hatred which wild stories have exasperated and to reveal what remains of humanity in the most envenomed enemy It can also draw the attention of the different Governments, or at least of the general public to cases where a speedy understanding would be in the interest of both parties—as, for instance, in the exchange of men who are so seriously wounded, that they will be quite unable to take further part in the war, and whom it is useless and inhuman to keep languishing far from their friends Finally, it can effectively direct public generosity, which often hesitates for want of guidance It can, for instance, point out to

neutral countries, who are so ungrudging in their anxiety to aid the sufferings of the combatants, where help is most urgently needed—for the wounded prisoners, convalescents leaving the hospital without linen or boots, and with no claims on the enemy for further support [1]

Instead of showering gifts (which, no doubt, are never superfluous) on the armies who can and should be supported by the peoples for whom they are fighting neutrals might well reserve the greater part of their generosity for those who are most destitute those whose need is the greatest, for they are feeble, broken, and alone

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But there is another class of prisoners on whom I would like interest to be specially concentrated, for their situation is far more precarious, unprotected as they are by any international convention These are the civil prisoners They are one of the innovations of this unbridled war which seems to have set itself to violate all the rights of humanity In former wars it was only a question of a few hostages arrested here and there as a guarantee of good faith for

[1] On this point, I would echo the appeal in the article cited above, from the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*

the pledge of some conquered town Never until now had one heard of populations taken bodily into captivity on the model of ancient conquests—a custom actively revived since the beginning of this war Such a contingency not having been foreseen, no conventions existed to regulate the situation in the laws of war, if the words have any meaning And as it would have been awkward to formulate fresh laws in the midst of the struggle, it seemed more simple to overlook them It has been as though these unfortunates did not exist

But they do exist, and in thousands. Their number seems about equal on both sides Which of the belligerents took the initiative in these captures? At present certainty is im possible It seems clea that in the second half of July Germany ordered the arrest of a number of Alsatian civilians To this France replied the day after her mobilisation by de claring prisoners Germans and Austrians then to be found on her territory The casting of this vast net was followed by similar action in Germany and Austria, though, perhaps, with less result. The conquest of Belgium and the invasion of the North of France brought about a redoubling of these measures aggravated by

violence The Germans, on retiring after their defeat on the Marne, methodically made a clean sweep in the towns and villages of Picardy and Flanders of all persons capable of bearing arms—500 men at Douai, at Amiens 1,800 summoned before the citadel on some apparently harmless pretext, and carried off without even the possibility of returning for a change of clothes

In many cases the captures had not even the excuse of military utility In the village of Sompuis (Marne) on September 10th, the Saxons seized a helpless village priest of seventy three, scarcely able to walk and five old men of ages from sixty to seventy, one of whom was lame, and took them away on foot Elsewhere women and children are taken, happy if they can remain together Here a husband, mad with grief searches for his wife and son aged three, who have disappeared since the Germans passed through Quievrechain (Nord) There it is a mother and her children taken by the French near Guebwiller, the children were sent back, but not the mother A French captain, wounded by the bursting of a shell, saw his wife also wounded by German bullets at Nomeny (Meurthe et Moselle), since when

she has disappeared, taken he does not know where An old peasant woman of sixty three is taken away from her husband near Villers aux Vents (Meuse) by a company of Germans A child of sixteen is seized at its mother's house at Mulhouse

Such action shows an utter lack of human feeling and is almost more absurd than cruel It really appears as though people had been deliberately separated from all who were dearest to them, and of those who have so disappeared no trace remains by which they can at present be found I am not speaking of Belgium, there the silence was of the grave Of what is taking place there nothing has been heard in the outer world for three months Are the villages and towns still in existence? I have before me letters from parents (in some cases belonging to neutral nations) begging for news of their children of twelve or eight years of age detained in Belgium since hostilities broke out I have even found in the lists of these vanished children -doubtless prisoners of war—youthful citizens of four and two years of age Are we to understand that they too could have been mobilised?

We see the anguish of the survivors Imagine

the distress of those who have disappeared, deprived of money or the means of obtaining any from their families What misery is revealed in the first letters received from such families interned in France or Germany! A mother whose little boy is ill, although rich cannot procure any money Another with two children, requests us to warn her family that if after the war, nothing more is heard of her, it will mean that she has died of hunger These cries of misery seemed in the noise of battle to fall on deaf ears for the first two months The Red Cross itself, absorbed in its immense task, reserved all its help for the military prisoners, and the Governments seemed to show a superb disdain for their unfortunate citizens Of what use are such as cannot serve! Yet these are the most innocent victims of this war They have not taken part in it and nothing had prepared them for such calamities

Fortunately a man of generous sympathies (he will not forgive me for publishing his name), Dr Ferrière, was touched by the misfortunes of these outcasts of the war With a tenacity as patient as it was passionate, he set himself to construct in the swarming hive of Red Cross workers a special department to deal with their

distress Refusing to be discouraged by the innumerable difficulties and the remote chances of success, he persevered, limiting himself at first to drawing up lists of the missing, and trying to inspire confidence in their anxious friends He then attempted by every means in his power to discover the place of internment, and to re establish communications between relations and friends What joy when one can announce to a family that the son or the father has been found! Every one of us at our table —for I, too, had the honour of sharing in the work—rejoices as though he were a member of that family And as luck would have it the first letter of this kind which I had to write was to comfort some good people in my own little town in the Nivernais

Great progress has already been made The most pressing needs have obtained a hearing The Governments have agreed to liberate women, children under seventeen, and men over sixty Repatriation began on October 23rd through the Bureau of Berne created by the Federal Council It remains, if not to deliver the others (we can not count on this before the end of the war), at any rate to put them in communication with their families In such cases, as in many others,

more can be expected from the charitable efforts of private individuals than from Governments The friends with whom we communicated in Germany or Austria as in France have replied with enthusiasm all showing a generous desire to take part in our work It is such questions transcending national pride which reveal the underlying fellowship of the nations which are tearing each other to pieces, and the sacrilegious folly of war How friends and enemies are drawn together in the face of common suffering which the efforts of all humanity would hardly suffice to alleviate!

When after three months of fratricidal struggle one has felt the calming influence of this wide human sympathy and turns once more to the field of strife the rasping cries of hate in the press inspire only horror and pity What object have they in view? They wish to punish crimes and are a crime in themselves for murderous words are the seeds of future murder In the diseased organism of a fevered Europe everything vibrates and reverberates without end Every word, every action, arouses reprisals Him who fans hatred hatred flares up to consume Heroes of officialdom! bullies of the press! the blows which you deal very often reach your own

people, little though you think it— your soldiers, your prisoners delivered into the hands of the enemy. They answer for the harm which you have done, and you escape the danger.

We cannot stop the war, but we can make it less bitter. There are medicines for the body. We need medicines for the soul, to dress the wounds of hatred and vengeance by which the world is being poisoned. We who write—let that be our task. And as the Red Cross pursues its work of mercy in the midst of the combat, like the bees of Holy Writ that made their honey in the jaws of the lion, let us try to support its efforts. Let our thoughts follow the ambulances that gather up the wounded on the field of battle. May *Notre Dame la Misère* lay on the brow of raging Europe her stern but succouring hand. May she open the eyes of these peoples blinded by pride and show them that they are but poor human flocks, equal in the face of suffering—suffering at all times so great that there is no reason to add to the burden.

Journal de Genève, October 30 1914

VI

TO THE PEOPLE THAT IS SUFFERING FOR JUSTICE

(For *King Albert's Book*)

BELGIUM has just written an Epic, whose echoes will resound throughout the ages Like the three hundred Spartans, the little Belgian army confronts for three months the German Colossus, Leman-Leonides, the Thermopylæ of Liége, Louvain, like Troy burnt, the deeds of King Albert surrounded by his valiant men with what legendary grandeur are these figures already invested, and history has not yet completed their story! The heroism of this people, who, without a murmur sacrificed everything for honour, has burst like a thunderclap upon us at a time when the spirit of victorious Germany was enthroning in the world a conception of political realism, resting stolidly on force and self interest It was a liberation of the op

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pressed idealism of the West. And that the signal should have been given by this little nation seemed a miracle

Men call the sudden appearance of a hidden reality a miracle It is the shock of danger which makes us best understand the character of individuals and of nations What discoveries this war has caused us to make in those around us, even among those nearest and dearest to us! What heroic hearts and savage beasts! The inner soul, not a new soul, reveals itself

In this fearful hour Belgium has seen the hidden genius of her race emerge The sterling qualities that she has displayed during the last three months evoke admiration, it should not surprise any one who in the pages of history, has felt, coursing through the ages, the vigorous sap of her people Small in numbers and in territory, but one of the greatest in Europe in virtue of her overflowing vitality The Belgians of to day are the sons of the Flemings of Courtrai The men of this land never feared to oppose their powerful neighbours, the kings of France or Spain—now heroes, now victims, Artevelde and Egmont. Their soil, watered by the blood of millions of warriors is the most

fertile in Europe in the harvests of the spirit From it arose the art of modern painting, spread throughout the world by the school of the van Eycks at the time of the Renaissance From it arose the art of modern music, of that polyphony which thrilled through France, Germany, and Italy for nearly two centuries From it, too, came the superb poetic efflorescence of our times and the two writers who most brilliantly represent French literature in the world, Maeterlinck and Verhaeren, are Belgian They are the people who have suffered most and have borne their sufferings most bravely and cheerfully, the martyr people of Philip II and of Kaiser Wilhelm and they are the people of Rubens, the people of Kermesses and of Till Ulenspiegel

He who knows the amazing epic re told by Charles de Coster *The heroic joyous, and glorious adventures of Ulenspiegel and Lamme Goedzak*, those two Flemish worthies who might take their places side by side with the immortal Don Quixote and his Sancho Panza—he who has seen that dauntless spirit at work, rough and facetious, rebellious by nature, always offending the established powers running the gauntlet of all trials and hardships, and emerg

ing from them always gay and smiling—realises also the destinies of the nation that gave birth to Ulenspiegel, and even in the darkest hour fearlessly looks towards the approaching dawn of rich and happy days. Belgium may be invaded. The Belgian people will never be conquered nor crushed. The Belgian people cannot die.

At the end of the story of *Till Ulenspiegel*, when they think he is dead, and are going to bury him, he wakes up.

'*Are they*' he asks, '*going to bury Ulenspiegel the soul, Nele the heart of mother Flanders? Sleep, perhaps, but die, no! Come Nele.*'

And he departed singing his sixth song. But no one knows where he sang his last.

VII

LETTER TO MY CRITICS

November 17 1914

THERE has reached me, after much delay, at Geneva, where I am engaged on the International work of Prisoners of War, the echo of attacks against me in certain newspapers, roused by the articles that I have published in the *Journal de Genève*, or rather by two or three passages arbitrarily chosen from those articles (for they themselves are scarcely known to anybody in France) My best reply will be to collect what I have written and publish it in Paris I would not add a word of explanation for there is not a line that I did not think it my right and my duty to set down Moreover, I think that there is better work to do at this moment than to defend oneself, there are others to defend, the thousands of victims who are

The editor of a great Paris paper having offered to publish my reply to those who attacked me, I sent him this article, which never appeared

fighting in France Time devoted to polemics is like a theft from these unfortunates, from these prisoners and families, whose hands seeking each other across space were trying to unite at Geneva.

But not content with attacking my personality, they have attacked ideas and a cause which I believe to be that of the true France, and since my friends expect me to defend these thoughts which are also theirs, I profit by the hospitality which is offered me to reply distinctly and frankly in good French

I have published four articles a letter, to Gerhart Hauptmann, written the day after the devastation of Louvain, "Above the Battle," "The Lesser of Two Evils," and "Inter Arma Caritas" In these four articles I have stated that of all the imperialisms which are the scourge of the world, Prussian Military Imperialism is the worst I have declared that it is the enemy of European liberty, the enemy of Western civilisation, the enemy of Germany herself, and that it must be destroyed On this point I imagine we are agreed

To what do my critics take exception? Without entering into the discussion of certain points of detail, such as the appeal made by the Allies to the forces of Asia and Africa of which I

disapprove and still disapprove because I see in it a near and grave danger for Europe and for the Allies themselves, and because this danger is already materialising in threats of disturbance in the world of Islam—exception is taken essentially on two grounds

1 My refusal to include the German people and its military and intellectual rulers in the same denunciation

2 The esteem and friendship which I have for the individuals in the country with which we are at war

I will reply first of all without ambiguity to this second reproach Yes, I have German friends as I have French, Italian, and English friends, and friends of every race They are my wealth I am proud of it and keep it When one has had the good fortune to meet in this world loyal souls with whom one shares one's most intimate thoughts, and with whom one has formed bonds of brotherly union such bonds are sacred and not to be broken asunder in the hour of trial He would be a coward who timidly ceased to own them, in order to obey the insolent summons of a public opinion which has no right over the heart Does the love of country demand this unkindness of thought which is associated with

the name Cornélienne? Corneille himself has given the answer

> *—Albe vous a nommé, je ne vous connais plus*
> *—Je vous connais encore, et c'est ce qui me tue*

Certain letters which I shall reproduce later, will show the grief sometimes almost tragic that such friendships mean in these moments Thanks to them, we have at least been able to defend ourselves against a hatred which is more murderous than war, since it is an infection produced by its wounds, and it does as much harm to those whom it possesses as to those against whom it is directed

This poison I see with apprehension spreading at the present moment Amongst the victim populations, the cruelties and ravages committed by the German armies have brought to birth a desire for reprisals This, when once in existence is not for the press to exasperate, for such a desire runs the risk of leading to dangerous injustice—dangerous not only for the conquered but above all for the conquerors France has, in this war, the chance of playing the nobler part the rarest chance that the world has ever seen A German wrote to me a few weeks ago "France has won in this war a prodigious

moral triumph The sympathies of the whole world are drawn towards her, and most extraordinary of all, Germany herself has a secret leaning towards her enemy' All should wish that this moral triumph may be hers to the end, and that she may remain to the end just straightforward, and humane I could never distinguish the cause of France from that of humanity It is just because I am French that I leave to our Prussian enemies the motto "*Oderint, dum metuant*" I wish France to be loved, I wish her to be victorious not only by force, not only by right (that would be difficult enough), but by that large and generous heart which is pre eminently hers I wish her to be strong enough to fight without hatred and to regard even those against whom she is forced to fight as misguided brothers who must be pitied when they have been rendered harmless

Our soldiers know it well, and I say nothing here of letters from the front which tell us of compassion and kindness between the combatants But the civilians who are outside the combat, who do not fight, but talk, who write and embroil themselves in a factitious and lunatic agitation and are never exhausted these are delivered over to the winds of feverish

iolence And there is the danger For they form opinion, the only opinion that can be expressed (all others are forbidden) It is for these that I write, not for those who are fighting (they have no need of us!).

And when I hear the publicists trying to rouse the energies of the nation by all the stimulants at their disposal for this one object, the total crushing of the enemy nation I think it my duty to rise in opposition to what I believe to be at once a moral and a political error You make war against a State, not against a people It would be monstrous to hold sixty five million men responsible for the acts of some thousands—perhaps some hundreds Here in French Switzerland, so passionately in sympathy with France, so eager both in its sympathies and in the duty of restraining them, I have been able for three months by reading German letters and pamphlets, to examine closely the conscience of the German nation And I have been able thus to take account of a good many facts which escape the greater part of the French people The first the most striking, the most ignored, is that there is not in Germany as a whole any real hatred of France (all the hatred is turned against England) The especial pathos of the

situation lies in the fact that the French spirit only really began to exercise an attraction upon Germany some two or three years ago Germany was beginning to discover the true France, the France of work and of faith The new generations, the young classes that they have just led to the abattoir of Ypres and Dixmude, numbered the purest souls, the greatest idealists, those most possessed by the dream of universal brotherhood If I say that for many among them the war has been a laceration, "a horror, a failure, a renunciation of every ideal, an abdication of the spirit," as one of them wrote on the eve of his death—if I say that the death of Péguy has been mourned by many young Germans, no one would believe me But belief will be a necessity the day I publish the documents which I have collected

It is somewhat better understood in France how this German nation enveloped in the network of lies woven by its Government, and abandoning herself thereto with a blind and obstinate loyalty is profoundly convinced that she was attacked, hemmed in by the jealousy of the world, and that she must defend herself at all costs or die It is among the chivalrous traditions of France to render homage to the courage of an adversary

One owes it to that adversary to recognise that in default of other virtues the spirit of sacrifice is, in the present instance, almost boundless It would be a great mistake to force it to extremes Instead of driving this blind people to a magnificent and desperate defence, let us try to open their eyes It is not impossible An Alsatian patriot, to whom one could not impute indulgence for Germany, Dr Bucher of Strasbourg, told me not long since, that even though the German is full of haughty prejudices carefully fostered by his teachers, he is at any rate always amenable to discussion and his docile spirit is accessible to arguments As an example, I would instance the secret evolution that I see in progress in the thought of certain Germans Numbers of German letters that I have read this month begin to utter agonised questionings as to the legitimacy of the proceedings of Germany in Belgium I have seen this anxiety growing little by little, in consciences which at first reposed in the conviction of their right Truth is slowly dawning What will happen if its light conquers and spreads? Carry truth in your hands! Let it be our strongest weapon! Let us, like the soldiers of the Revolution, whose heart lives again in our troops, fight not against our enemies, but

for them In saving the world, let us save them too France does not break old chains in order to rivet new

Your thoughts are fixed on victory I think of the peace which will follow For however insistently the most militarist among you may talk, venturing, as did an article to hold out the delightful promise of a perpetual war—"a war which will last after this war, indefinitely "[1] (it will come to an end, nevertheless—for lack of combatants!) there must come a day when you will stretch out the hand of friendship, you and your neighbours across the Rhine, if it were only to come to an agreement, for the sake of your own business You will have to re establish supportable and humane relations so set to work in such a manner as not to make them impossible! Do not break down all the bridges, since it will ever be necessary to cross the river Do not destroy the future A good open, clean wound will heal but do not poison it Let us be on our guard against hatred If we prepare for war in peace according to the wisdom of nations, we should also prepare for peace in war It is a task which seems to me not unworthy of those among us who find themselves

[1] Paul Bourget

outside the struggle, and who through the life of the spirit have wider relations with the universe —a little lay church which, to-day more than the other, preserves its faith in the unity of human thought and believes that all men are sons of the same Father In any case, if such a faith merits insult, the insults constitute an honour that we will claim as ours before the tribunal of posterity

VIII

THE IDOLS

For more than forty centuries it has been the effort of great minds who have attained liberty to extend this blessing to others, to liberate humanity and to teach men to see reality without fear or error, to look themselves in the face without false pride or false humility and to recognise their weakness and their strength, that they may know their true position in the universe They have illumined the path with the brightness of their lives and their example like the star of the magi, that mankind may have light

Their efforts have failed For more than forty centuries humanity has remained in bondage—I do not say to masters (for such are of the order of the flesh, of which I am not speaking here, and their chains break sooner or later) but to the phantoms of their own minds Such servitude comes from within We grow faint in

the endeavour to cut the bonds which bind mankind who straightway tie them again to be more firmly enthralled Of every liberator men make a master Every ideal which ought to liberate is transformed into a clumsy Idol The history of humanity is the history of Idols and of their successive reigns, and as humanity grows older the power of the Idol seems to wax greater and more destructive

At first the divinities were of wood, of stone, or of metal Those at any rate were not proof against the axe or against fire Others followed that no material force could reach, for they were graven in the invisible mind Yet all aspired to material dominion, and to secure for them that dominion the peoples of the world have poured out their best blood Idols of religions and of nationality the Idol of liberty whose reign was established in Europe by the armies of the *sans culotte* at the point of the bayonet The masters have changed, the slaves are still the same Our century has made the acquaintance of two new species The Idol of Race, at first the outcome of noble ideas, became in the laboratories of spectacled savants the Moloch which Germany hurled herself against France in 1870 and which her enemies now wish to use

against the Germany of to day The latest on the scene is that authentic product of German science, fraternally allied to the labours of industry of commerce, and of the firm of Krupp —the Idol of Kultur surrounded by its Levites, the thinkers of Germany

The common feature of the cult of all Idols is the adaptation of an ideal to the evil instincts of mankind Man cultivates the vices which are profitable to him, but feels the necessity of legitimising them being unwilling to sacrifice them, he must idealise them That is why the problem at which he has never ceased to labour throughout the centuries has been to harmonise his ideals with his own mediocrity He has always succeeded The crowd has no difficulty here It sets side by side its virtues and its vices, its heroism and its meanness The force of its passions and the rapid course of the days which carry it along cause it to forget its lack of logic

But the intelligent few cannot satisfy themselves with so little effort Not that they are, as is often said, less readily swayed by passion This is a grave error, the richer a life becomes

the more does it offer for passion to devour, and history sufficiently shows the terrifying paroxysms to which the lives of religious leaders and revolutionaries have attained. But these toilers in the spirit love careful work, and are repelled by popular modes of thought which perpetually break through the meshes of reasoning They have to make a more closely woven net in which instinct and idea, cost what it may combine to form a stouter tissue They thus achieve monstrous *chefs-d'œuvre* Give an intellectual any ideal and any evil passion and he will always succeed in harmonising the twain The love of God and the love of mankind have been invoked in order to burn, kill, and pillage The fraternity of 1793 was sister to the Holy Guillotine We have in our time seen Churchmen seeking and finding in the Gospels the justification of Banking and of War Since the outbreak of the war a clergyman of Wurtemberg established the fact that *neither Christ nor John the Baptist nor the apostles desired to suppress militarism*[1] A clever intellectual is a

[1] The Evangelical pastor Schienck in an article on "War and the New Testament,' quoted with approval by the Rev Ch Correvon in the *Journal religieux* of Neuchatel, November 14th

conjuror in ideas "*Nothing in my hands—nothing up my sleeves* The great trick is to extract from any given idea its precise contrary—war from the Sermon on the Mount, or, like Professor Ostwald, the military dictatorship of the Kaiser from the dream of an intellectual internationalism For such conjurors these things are but child's play

Let us expose them, by examining the words of this Dr Ostwald, who has appeared during the last few months as the Baptist of the Gospel of the spiked helmet

Here is the Idol to begin with—*Kultur* (*made in Germany*) *with a capital K* "*rectiligne et de quatre pointes comme un chevel de frise*," as Miguel de Unamuno wrote to me All around are little gods, the children of its loins *Kulturstaat*, *Kulturbund*, *Kulturimperium*

'*I am now*' (*it is the voice of Ostwald*[1]) '*going to explain to you the great secret of Germany We, or rather the Germanic race, have discovered the factor of* **Organisation** *Other peoples still live under the régime of individualism while we are under that of* **Organisation** *The stage of* **Organisation** *is a more advanced stage of civilisation*"

[1] In a declaration to the editor of the Swedish paper *Dagen*

It is surely clear that, like those missionaries who, in order to carry the Christian faith to heathen peoples, secure the co operation of a squadron and a landing party which straightway establish in the idolatrous country commercial stores protected by a ring of cannon, German intelligence cannot without selfishness keep her treasures to herself. She is obliged to share them

Germany wishes to organise *Europe for Europe has hitherto not been* organised *With us everything tends to elicit from each individual the maximal output in the direction most favourable for society That for us is liberty in its highest form* '

We may well pause to marvel at this way of talking about human "culture" as though it were a question of asparagus and artichokes Of this happiness, and these advantages this maximal output, this market garden culture, this liberty of artichokes subjected to a judicious forcing process, Professor Ostwald does not wish to deprive the other peoples of Europe As they are so unenlightened as not to acquiesce with enthusiasm

"*War will make them participate in the form of this* organisation *in our higher civilisation*

Thereupon the chemist philosopher, who is also

in his leisure hours a politician and a strategist, sketches in bold outline the picture of the victories of Germany and a remodelled Europe —a United States of Europe under the paternal sceptre of his mailed Kaiser England crushed, France disarmed, and Russia dismembered His colleague Haeckel completes this joyous *exposé* by dividing Belgium, the British Empire, and the North of France—like Perrette of the fable before her pitcher broke Unfortunately neither Haeckel nor Ostwald tell us if their plan for the establishment of this higher civilisation included the destruction of the Halle of Ypres, of the Library at Louvain, of the Cathedral at Rheims After all these conquests, divisions, and devastations, let us not overlook this wonderful sentence of which Ostwald certainly did not realise the sinister buffoonery, worthy of a Molière "You know that I am a pacifist"

However far the high priests of a cult may allow their emotion to carry them, their profession of faith still retains a certain diplomatic reserve which does not hamper their followers Thus the *Kulturmenschen* But the zeal of their Levites must frequently disturb the serenity of Moses and Aaron —Haeckel and Ostwald— by its intemperate frankness I do not know

what they think of the article of Thomas Mann which appeared in the November number of the *Neue Rundschau* "Gedanken im Kriege." But I do know what certain French intellectuals will think of it. Germany could not offer them a more terrible weapon against herself.

In an access of delirious pride and exasperated fanaticism Mann employs his envenomed pen to justify the worst accusations that have been made against Germany. While an Ostwald endeavours to identify the cause of *Kultur* with that of civilisation, Mann proclaims: "They have nothing in common. The present war is that of *Kultur* (i.e. of Germany) against civilisation."* And pushing this outrageous boast of pride to the point of madness, he defines civilisation as Reason (*Vernunft*, *Aufklarung*), Gentleness (*Sittigung*, *Sanftigung*), Spirit (*Geist*, *Auflosung*), and Kultur as 'a spiritual *organisation* of the world which does not exclude "bloody savagery." Kultur is 'the sublimation of the demoniacal" (*die Sublimierung des Damonischen*). It is "above morality, above reason, and above science." While Ostwald and Haeckel see in militarism merely an arm or instrument of which Kultur makes use to secure victory, Thomas Mann affirms that Kultur and Militarism are brothers—their

ideal is the same, their aim the same, their principle the same Their enemy is peace, is spirit ("*Ja, der Geist ist zivil, ist burgerlich*") He finally dares to inscribe on his own and his country's banner the words, "Law is the friend of the weak, it would reduce the world to a level War brings out strength"

Das Gesetz ist der Freund des Schwachen
Mochte gern die Welt verflächen
Aber der Krieg lasst die Kraft erscheinen

In this criminal glorification of violence, Thomas Mann himself has been surpassed Ostwald preached the victory of Kultur, if necessary by Force, Mann proved that Kultur is Force Some one was needed to cast aside the last veil of reserve and say "Force alone All else be silent" We have read extracts from the cynical article in which Maximilian Harden, treating the desperate efforts of his Government to excuse the violation of Belgian neutrality as feeble lies, dared to write

'*Why on earth all this fuss? Might creates our Right Did a powerful man ever submit himself to the crazy pretensions or to the judgment of a band of weaklings?*'

What a testimony to the madness into which

German intelligence has been precipitated by pride and struggle, and to the moral anarchy of this Empire, whose *organisation* is imposing only to the eyes of those who do not see farther than the façade! Who cannot see the weakness of a Government which gags its socialist press and yet tolerates such an insulting contradiction as this? Who does not see that such words defame Germany before the whole world for centuries to come? These miserable intellectuals imagine that with their display of infuriated Nietzcheism and Bismarckism they are acting heroically and impressing the world They merely disgust it They wish to be believed People are only too ready to believe them The whole of Germany will be made responsible for the delirium of a few writers Germany will one day realise she has had no more deadly enemy than her own intellectuals

I write here without prejudice, for I am certainly not proud of our French intellectuals The Idol of Race, or of Civilisation, or of Latinity, which they so greatly abuse, does not satisfy me I do not like any idol—not even that of Humanity But at any rate those to

which my country bows down are less dangerous They are not aggressive and moreover, there remains even in the most fanatical of our intellectuals a basis of native common sense of which the Germans of whom I have just spoken seem to have lost all trace. But it must be admitted that on neither side have they brought honour to the cause of reason, which they have not been able to protect against the winds of violence and folly There is a saying of Emerson's which is applicable to their failure

"*Nothing is more rare in any man than an act of his own*"

Their acts and their writings have come to them from others, from outside, from public opinion, blind and menacing I do not wish to condemn those who have been obliged to remain silent either because they are in the armies, or because the censorship which rules in countries involved in war has imposed silence upon them But the unheard of weakness with which the leaders of thought have everywhere abdicated to the collective madness has certainly proved their lack of *character*

Certain somewhat paradoxical passages in my own writings have caused me at times to be styled an anti intellectual, an absurd charge to

bring against one who has given his life to the worship of thought But it is true that Intellectualism has often appeared to me as a mere caricature of Thought—Thought mutilated, deformed, and petrified, powerless, not only to dominate the drama of life, but even to understand it And the events of to day have proved me more in the right than I wished to be. The intellectual lives too much in the realm of shadows, of ideas Ideas have no existence in themselves, but only through the hopes or experiences which can fill them. They are either summaries, or hypotheses, frames for what has been or will be, convenient or necessary formulæ One cannot live and act without them, but the evil is that people make them into oppressive realities No one contributes more to this than the intellectual, whose trade it is to handle them, who, biassed by his profession, is always tempted to subordinate reality to them Let there supervene a collective passion which completes his blindness, and it will be cast in the form of the idea which can best serve its purpose it transfers its life blood to that idea, and the idea magnifies and glorifies it in turn Nothing is more long lived in a man than a phantom which his own mind has

created, a phantom in which are combined the madness of his heart and the madness of his head Hence the intellectuals in the present crisis have not been overcome by the warlike contagion less than others, but they have themselves contributed to spreading it I would add (for it is their punishment) that they are victims of the contagion for a longer period for whilst simple folk constantly submit to the test of everyday action and of experience, and modify their ideas without conscious regret, the intellectual finds himself bound in the net of his own creation and every word that he writes draws the bonds tighter Hence while we see that in the soldiers of all armies the fire of hate is rapidly dying down and that they already fraternise from trench to trench, the writers redouble their furious arguments We can easily prophesy that when the remembrance of this senseless war has passed away among the people its bitterness will still be smouldering in the hearts of the intellectuals

Who shall break the idols? Who shall open the eyes of their fanatical followers? Who shall make them understand that no god of their minds, religious or secular, has the right to force himself on other human beings—even he who

seems the most worthy—or to despise them? Admitting that your *Kultur* on German soil produces the sturdiest and most abundant human crop, who has entrusted to you the mission of cultivating other lands? Cultivate your own garden We will cultivate ours There is a sacred flower for which I would give all the products of your artificial culture It is the wild violet of Liberty You do not care about it You tread it under foot But it will not die It will live longer than your masterpieces of barrack and hot-house It is not afraid of the wind It has braved other tempests than that of to-day It grows under brambles and under dead leaves Intellectuals of Germany, intellectuals of France, labour and sow on the fields of your own minds respect those of others Before *organising* the world you have enough to do to *organise* your own private world Try for a moment to forget your ideas and behold yourselves And above all, look at us Champions of *Kultur* and of Civilisation, of the Germanic races and of Latinity, enemies, friends, let us look one another in the eyes My brother, do you not see there a heart similar to your own, with the same hopes, the same egoism, and the same heroism and power of dream which for ever

refashions its gossamer web? *Vois tu pas que tu es moi?* said the old Hugo to one of his enemies

The true man of culture is not he who makes of himself and his ideal the centre of the universe, but who looking around him sees, as in the sky the stream of the Milky Way, thousands of little flames which flow with his own and who seeks neither to absorb them nor to impose upon them his own course, but to give himself the religious persuasion of their value and of the common source of the fire by which all alike are fed Intelligence of the mind is nothing without that of the heart It is nothing also without good sense and humour—good sense which shows to every people and to every being their place in the universe—and humour which is the critic of misguided reason, the soldier who, following the chariot to the Capitol, reminds Cæsar in his hour of triumph that he is bald

Journal de Genève December 4, 1914

IX

FOR EUROPE

MANIFESTO OF THE WRITERS AND THINKERS OF CATALONIA

NATIONAL passions are triumphant For months they have rent our Europe They think they will soon have compassed its destruction and effaced its image in the hearts of the last of these who remain faithful to it But they are mistaken They have renewed the faith that we had in it They have made us recognise its value and our love And from one country to another we have discovered our unknown brothers, sons of the same mother, who in the hour when she is denied, consecrate themselves to her defence

To day, it is from Spain that the voice reaches us from the thinkers of Catalonia Let us pass on their appeal which comes to us from the shores of the Mediterranean, like the sound of a Christmas bell Another day the bells of Northern Europe will be heard in their turn And soon

all will ring together in unison The test is good Let us be thankful Those who desired to separate us have joined our hands

R R

December 31, 1914

MANIFESTO OF THE *FRIENDS OF THE MORAL UNITY OF EUROPE*

A number of literary and scientific men at Barcelona, as far removed from amorphous internationalism on the one hand as from mere parochialism on the other, have banded themselves together *to affirm their unchangeable belief in the moral unity of Europe*, and to further this belief as far as the suffocating conditions resulting from the present tragic circumstances permit

We set out from the principle that the terrible war which to day is rending the heart of this Europe of ours is, by implication, a *Civil War*

A civil war does not exactly mean an unjust war, still, it can only be justified by a conflict between great ideals, and if we desire the triumph of one or the other of these ideals, it must be for the sake of the entire European Commonwealth and its general well being None of the belligerents, therefore, can be allowed to aim at the complete destruction of its opponents, and

it is even less legitimate to start out from the criminal hypothesis that one or another of the parties is *de facto* already excluded from this superior commonwealth

Yet we have seen with pain assertions such as these approved and deliriously spread abroad, and not always amongst common people, or by the voices of those who speak not with authority For three months it seemed as if our ideal Europe were shipwrecked, but a reaction is making its appearance already A thousand indications assure us that, in the world of intellect at any rate, the winds are quietening down, and that in the best minds the eternal values will soon spring up once more

It is our purpose to assist in this reaction, to contribute to making it known, and, as far as we are able, to ensure its triumph We are not alone We have with us in every quarter of the world the ardent aspirations of far sighted minds, and the unvoiced wishes of thousands of men of good will, who, beyond their sympathies and personal preferences, are determined to remain faithful to the cause of this moral unity

And above all we have, in the far distant future the appreciation of the men who to morrow will

applaud this modest work to which we are devoting ourselves to day

We will begin by giving the greatest possible publicity to those actions, declarations, and manifestations—whether they emanate from belligerent or neutral nations—in which the effort of reviving the feeling of a higher unity and a generous altruism may become apparent Later we shall be able to extend our activities and place them at the service of new enterprises We demand nothing more of our friends of our press and of our fellow citizens than a little attention for these quickenings of reality a little respect for the interests of a higher humanity, and a little love for the great traditions and the rich possibilities of a *unified Europe*

BARCELONA, *November* 27 1914

EUGENIO D'ORS, Member of the Institute, MANUEL DE MONTOLIÚ Author, AURELIO RAS Director of the Review *Estudio*, AUGUSTIN MURÚA, University Professor, TELESFORO DE ARANZADI, University Professor, MIGUEL S OLIVER, JUAN PALAU, publicist PABLO VILA Director of *Mont d'Or* College, ENRIQUE JARDI Barrister, E MESSEGUER, publicist, CARMEN KARR, Director of the *Residencia de Estudiantes*

For Europe (Spain)

El Hogar, ESTEBAN TERRADES, Member of the Institute JOSE ZULUETA, Member of Parliament, R JORI, Author, EUDALDO DURAN REYNALS, Librarian of the *Biblioteca de Cataluna*, RAFAEL CAMPALANS, Engineer, J M.ª LÓPEZ PICO, Author, R RUCABADO, Author; E CUELLO CALON, University Professor, MANUEL REVENTOS Professor of the *Escuela de Funcionarios*, J FARRAN MAYORAL, Author, JAIME MASSÓ TORRENTS, Member of the Institute, JORGE RUBIO BALAGUER, Director of the *Biblioteca de Cataluna*

Translated from the Spanish by R A

Journal de Geneve, January 9 1915

X

I OR EUROPE

AN APPEAL FROM HOLLAND TO THE INTELLECTUALS OF ALL NATIONS

IN a recent article, in which I put before the readers of the *Journal de Geneve* the fine manifesto of the Catalonian intellectuals "For the Moral Unity of Europe," I stated that after this appeal from the Mediterranean South I would make known those of the North Amongst the latter here is the voice of Holland —

The *Nederlandsche Anti Oorlog Raad* (Dutch Anti War Council) is perhaps the most important attempt that these last months has seen to unify pacifist thought Whilst recognising the value of what has been done for some years past in favour of peace, the N A O R is convinced that "all this work could have been much more effective and could even have prevented the present catastrophe, if it had been better taken in hand" There has been lack of co operation, wastage of

energy, lack of penetration to the mass of the people The problem is to discover if this internal defect cannot be remedied "Will the world wide tragedy of rivalry continue even inside the pacifist movement, or will this war teach those who are fighting against it the necessity of an energetic organization and preparation?"

To this task the N A O R is devoting itself Founded on October 8, 1914, it had succeeded by January 15th in securing the adhesion of 350 Dutch societies (official, political, of all parties, religious, intellectual, labour), and its manifestoes brought together the signatures of more than a hundred of the most illustrious names of the Netherlands—statesmen, prelates, officers, writers, professors, artists, business men, etc It therefore represents a considerable moral force

Let it be said at once that the N A O R does not look for an immediate end of the war by a peace at any price On the one hand, it declares itself "it has formed no presumptuous idea of its strength, it has no naive confidence in vague peace formulæ, nor even in well defined mutual obligations The universal war of to-day has, alas! taught it much in this respect also" And, moreover, it is quite aware that a peace at any price, under present conditions, would only be a conse

cration of injustice The great public meetings which it has organised on December 15th in the chief towns of the Netherlands have unanimously declared that such a peace seemed neither possible nor even desirable I will add that certain of the articles of the N A O R suggest, with all the reserve necessitated by its attitude of neutrality and its profound desire for impartiality, the direction of its suppressed sympathies Especially the following —

"To repair the harm done by this war to the prestige of law in international relations To bow before the law, whether customary or codified in treaties is a duty, even where sanction is wanting Reform will be in vain if there is not respect for law, and nations refuse to keep their word, a durable peace is out of the question"

The object of the N A O R is especially to study the conditions in which we can realise a just humane, and durable peace which will secure for Europe a long future of fruitful tranquillity and of common work, and to interest the public opinion of all nations in securing such a peace I cannot analyse here, owing to lack of space, the various public manifestoes, the *Appeal to the People of Holland* (October 1914), or the *Appeal for Co operation and the Preparation of Peace*, a kind

of attempt to mobilise the pacifist armies (November) The latter of these contains ideas which agree in many cases with those of the *Union of Democratic Control* (the abolition of secret diplomacy, and a larger control of foreign affairs by Parliaments, the prohibition of special armament industries, the establishment of the elementary principle of international law, that no country shall be annexed without the consent, freely expressed, of the population) I will content myself here with publishing the manifesto addressed to the thinkers, writers, artists, and scientists of all nations In this manifesto we shall find support for the tasks which we ourselves have undertaken in working to keep the thought of Europe sheltered from the ravages of the war, and in continually recalling it to the recognition of its highest duty, which is, even in the worst storms of passion, to safeguard the spiritual unity of civilized humanity

R R

February 7 1915.

NEDERLANDSCHE ANTI OORLOG RAAD

Immediately after the European war had broken out, several groups of intellectuals be

longing to the warring nations have advocated the justice of their country's cause in manifes toes and pamphlets, which they have scattered in great numbers throughout the neutral states[1] And this still goes on side by side with the war of the sword a no less vehement war is carried on with the pen

Those writings have also reached us, the undersigned, all subjects of a neutral state We have read them with the greatest interest, as they enable us to form a clear opinion not only of the frame of mind brought about by the outbreak of the war among the intellectuals of the warring nations, but also of the opinions they hold about the causes and the nature of the present war

It has not surprised us neutrals to see that the spokesmen of the opposing nations are equally convinced of the justice of their cause Neither has it surprised us that those spokesmen evince such a strong inclination to advocate their rights before the neutral states Indeed, in such a terrible struggle it is a psychologic necessity for all the nations concerned that

[1] The famous 'Appeal to the Civilised Nations" had been sent out shortly before this by the ninety three German intellectuals

they should believe implicitly in the justice of their cause, they must ardently desire to testify to their faith before others Only an unshakable confidence in the absolute justice of their cause can keep them from wavering or despairing during the gigantic struggle

But we have perceived with great sorrow that the greater part of those writings are absolutely lacking in the slightest effort to be just towards opponents, that the meanest and most malicious motives are ascribed to them

We respect the conviction of every one of the warring nations that they are fighting for a just cause Even if we should have formed an opinion about the origin of the war, we should yet not think the present a fit moment to oppose different opinions or arguments to each other This should be the work of the future, when scientific research will be able to consider all the facts quietly when national passions will have subsided and the nations will listen with more composure to the verdict of history

Yet we think it our duty and we consider it a privilege given to us as neutrals to utter a serious warning against the systematic rousing of a lasting bitterness between the now warring parties

Though fully aware that the late events have irritated the feeling of nationality to the utmost, yet we believe that patriotism should not prevent any one from doing justice to the character of one's enemy, that faith in the virtues of one's own nation need not be coupled with the idea that all vices are inherent in the opposing nation, that confidence in the justice of one's own cause should not make one forget that the other side cherishes that conviction with the same energy

Besides no one should forget that the question "What nations will be enemies?" depends on political relations, which vary according to unexpected circumstances To day's enemy may be to morrow's friend

The tone, in which of late not only the papers to which we referred higher up but also the newspaper press of the warring nations has written about the enemy threatens to arouse and to perpetuate the bitterest hatred

To the evils directly resulting from the war, will be added the regrettable consequence that co operation between the belligerent nations in art, science, and all other labours of peace will be delayed for some time, nay, even made quite impossible Yet the time will come after this war, when the nations will have to resume

some form of intercourse, social as well as spiritual

The fewer fierce accusations have been breathed on either side, the less one nation has attacked the character of the other, in short, the less lasting bitterness has been roused, so much the easier will it be afterwards to take up again the broken threads of international intercourse

This rousing of hatred and bitterness is also an impediment in the way that leads our thoughts towards peace

Every one who in word or writing rails at the enemy or excites national passions is responsible for the longer duration of this horrible war

Therefore, we the undersigned, appeal to all those of the same mind, especially among those belonging to the warring nations, to co operate for this purpose that in word and writing everything be avoided that may rouse lasting animosity

We especially address this appeal to those who influence public opinion in their own country, to men of science and to artists, to those who long ago have realised that in all civilised countries there are men and women with the same notions of justice and morality as they have themselves

May the representatives of all countries—according to the saying of a Dutch statesman—remember what unites them and not only what separates them!

Signed—H C DRESSELHUYS, Secretary General of the Ministry of Justice, *President* of the N A O R J H SCHAPER, member of the Second Chamber, *Vice President* Madame M ASSER THORBEKE, secretary of the Dutch League for Women's Suffrage Professor Dr D VAN EMBDEN, Professor of the law at Amsterdam Dr KOOLEN, member of the Second Chamber V H RUTGERS, member of the Second Chamber Baron de JONG VAN BEEK EN DONK, *Secretary* of the N A O R (and also subscribed to by 130 politicians, intellectuals, and artists, including FREDERIK VAN EEDEN, WILLEM MENGELBERG, etc) Bureau Theresiastraat, 51, The Hague

Journal de Genève, February 5, 1915

XI

LETTER TO FREDERIK VAN EEDEN

January 12, 1915

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You offer me the hospitality of your paper *De Amsterdammer*. I thank you and accept. It is good to take one's stand with those free souls who resist the unrestrained fury of national passions. In this hideous struggle, with which the conflicting peoples are rending Europe, let us at least preserve our flag, and rally round that. We must re-create European opinion. That is our first duty. Among these millions who are only conscious of being Germans, Austrians, Frenchmen, Russians, English, etc., let us strive to be *men*, who, rising above the selfish aims of short-lived nations, do not loose sight of the interests of civilisation as a whole—that civilisation which each race mistakenly identifies with its own, to destroy that of the others. I wish your noble country,[1] which has always preserved

[1] Holland

its political and moral independence among the great surrounding states, could become the heart of this ideal Europe we believe in—the hearth round which shall gather all those who seek to rebuild her

Everywhere there are men who think thus though they are unknown one to another Let us get to know them Let us bring together each and all Here I would introduce to you two important groups, one from the North and one from the South—the Catalonian thinkers who have formed the society of *Amis de l'Unité Morale de l'Europe* at Barcelona—I send you their fine appeal and the *Union of Democratic Control* founded in London and inspired by indignation against this European war, and by the firm determination to render it impossible for the diplomatists and militarists to inaugurate another I am having the programmes and the first publications sent to you This Union whose general Council contains members of Parliament, and authors like Norman Angell, Israel Zangwill, and Vernon Lee, has already formed twenty branches in towns in Great Britain

Let us try and unite permanently all such organisations, though each has its racial characteristics and peculiarities, for all aim at the estab

lishing the peace of Europe as best they may With them let us take stock of our united resources Then we can act

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What shall we do? Try to put an end to the struggle? It is no use thinking of that now The brute is loose, and the Governments have succeeded so well in spreading hatred and violence abroad that even if they wished they could not bring it back again into control The damage is irreparable It is possible that the neutral countries of Europe and the United States of America may decide one day to interfere, and endeavour to put an end to a war which, if it continued indefinitely, would threaten to ruin them as well as the belligerents But I do not know what one must expect from this too tardy intervention

In any case I see another outlet for our activity Let the war be what it may—we can no longer intervene, but at least we must try to make the scourge productive of as little evil and as much good as possible And in order to do this we must get public opinion all the world over to see to it that the peace of the future shall be just, that the greed of the conqueror (whoever it may be)

and the intrigues of diplomacy, do not make it the seed of a new war of revenge, and that the moral crimes committed in the past are not repeated or allowed to stain yet darker the record of humanity That is why I hold the first article of the Union of Democratic Control as a sacred principle "No Province shall be transferred from one Government to another without the consent by plebiscite of the population of such province We must oppose those odious maxims which have weighed too long on the populations they enslave and which quite recently Professor Lasson dared to repeat as a threat for the future, in his cynical Catechism of Force (*Das Kulturideal und der Krieg*)[1]

And this principle must be proposed and adopted at once without any delay If we waited to announce it until—the war being over—the congress of the Powers were assembled, we should be suspected of wishing to make justice serve the interest of the conquered It is now, when the forces of the two sides are equal, that we must

[1] To let a people he said, or still more a fraction of a people decide international questions for instance, which state shall control them, is as good as making the children of a house vote for their father It is the most ridiculous fallacy that human wit has ever invented '

establish this primordial right which soars over all the armies

From this principle we can deduce an immediate application Since the whole of Europe is disorganised let us profit by it to set in order this untidy house! For a long time injustices have been accumulating The moment of settling the general account will be an opportunity of rectifying them The duty of all of us who feel for the brotherhood of mankind is to stand for the rights of the small nations There are some in both camps Schleswig, Alsace, Lorraine, Poland, the Baltic nations, Armenia, the Jewish people At the beginning of the war Russia made some generous promises We have registered them in our minds, let her not forget them! We are as determined about Poland, torn by the claws of three imperial eagles, as we are about Belgium crucified We remember all It is because our fathers obsessed by their narrow realism and by selfish fears, let the rights of the people of Eastern Europe be violated, that to day the West is shattered, and the sword hangs over the small nations, over you my friends, as over the country which is befriending me, Switzerland Whoever harms one of us harms all the others Let us unite! Above all race questions, which

are for the most part a mask behind which pride crouches and the interests of the financial or aristocratic classes dissemble, there is a law of humanity, eternal and universal, of which we are all the servants and guardians, it is that of the right of a people to rule themselves And he who violates shall be the enemy of all

R R

De Amsterdammer Weekblad voor Nederland, January 24 1915

XII

OUR NEIGHBOUR THE ENEMY

March 15, 1915

WHILE the war tempest rages, uprooting the strongest souls and dragging them along in its furious cyclone I continue my humble pilgrimage, trying to discover beneath the ruins the rare hearts who have remained faithful to the old ideal of human fraternity What a sad joy I have in collecting and helping them!

I know that each of their efforts—like mine,—that each of their words of love, rouses and turns against them the hostility of the two hostile camps The combatants, pitted against each other, agree in hating those who refuse to hate Europe is like a besieged town Fever is raging Whoever will not rave like the rest is suspected And in these hurried times when justice cannot wait to study evidence, every suspect is a traitor Whoever insists, in the midst of war, on defending

peace among men knows that he risks his own peace, his reputation, his friends for his belief But of what value is a belief for which no risks are run?

Certainly it is put to the test in these days, when every day brings the echo of violence, injustice, and new cruelties But was it not still more tried when it was entrusted to the fishermen of Judea by him whom humanity pretends to honour still—with its lips more than with its heart? The rivers of blood the burnt towns all the atrocities of thought and action, will never efface in our tortured souls the luminous track of the Galilean barque nor the deep vibrations of the great voices which from across the centuries proclaim reason as man s true home You choose to forget them and to say (like many writers of to day) that this war will begin a new era in the history of mankind a reversal of former values and that from it alone will future progress be dated That is always the language of passion Passion passes away Reason remains—reason and love Let us continue to search for their young shoots amidst the bloody ruins

I feel the same joy when I find the fragile and valiant flowers of human pity piercing the icy crust of hatred that covers Europe, as we feel

in these chilly March days when we see the first flowers appear above the soil They show that the warmth of life persists below the surface of the earth, that fraternal love persists below the surface of the nations, and that soon nothing will prevent it rising again

I have on several occasions shown how the neutral countries have become the refuge of this European spirit, which seems driven from the belligerent countries by the armies of the pen, more savage than the others because they risk nothing The efforts made in Holland or in Spain to save the moral unity of Europe the burning charity and untiring help that Switzerland lavishes on prisoners, on wounded on victims of both sides, are a great comfort to oppressed souls, who in every country are suffocating in the atmosphere of hatred forced on them, and who look for purer air But I find still more beautiful and touching the signs of fraternal aid between friends and enemies in belligerent countries, however rare and feeble they may be

If there are two countries between which the present war seems specially to have created an abyss of hatred and misunderstanding, they are England and Germany The writers and publicists of Germany, whose orders are to profess

for France rather sympathy and compassion than animosity, and who are even constrained to distinguish between the people and the Government of Russia have vowed eternal hatred against England *Hasse England* has become their *Delenda Carthago* The most moderate declare that the struggle cannot be ended except by the destruction of the *Seeherrschaft*[1] (naval supremacy) of Britain And Great Britain is not less determined to continue the conflict until German militarism has been totally eradicated Yet it is precisely between these two nations that the noblest bonds of mutual assistance for the misfortunes of the enemy have been formed and maintained

Two days after the declaration of war there was founded in London by the Archbishop of Canterbury and by well known persons such as J Allen Baker, M P the Right Hon W H Dickinson M P, Lord and Lady Courtney of Penwith, the *Emergency Committee for the Assistance of Germans, Austrians and Hungarians in Distress* This work which affects a large part of England, consists in paying the repatriation expenses of destitute civilians of accompanying German women and girls on their return journey, of securing hospitality in families for poor

Germans and finding work for them By the end of December almost £10,000 had been spent in this way Several sub committees visit Prisoners' Camps, facilitate correspondence between the belligerent nations or undertake, for Christmas to convey to interned alien enemies more than 20,000 parcels and 200 Christmas trees Another English society, already in existence before the war, the *Society of Friends of Foreigners in Distress*, regularly looks after 1,800 German and Austrian families. Finally, the Central Bureau (London) of the International Union of Women Suffrage Societies has rendered great service to foreigners paying for the return journey of between seven and eight thousand women

In Germany there has been founded at Berlin a similar Bureau for giving information and assistance to Germans abroad and to foreigners in Germany (*Auskunfts und Hilfsstelle fur Deutsche im Ausland und Auslænder in Deutschland*) Amongst its members may be noted aristo cratic names, and persons well known in the religious and academic world Frau Marie von Bulow Mœrlins, Helene Græfin Harrach, Nora Freiin von Schleinitz Professors W Foerster D Baumgarten, Paul Natorp, Martin Rade,

Siegmund Schultze, etc At its head is a lady of deep religious feeling, Dr Elisabeth Rotten As will be readily imagined, an undertaking of this kind has not failed to evoke suspicion and opposition in nationalist quarters But it has emerged successful and persists, and here are the terms in which it justifies its high mission against the ravings of German Chauvinism

' Since the beginning of the war we have recognised the obligation to interest ourselves in the welfare of foreigners stranded in Germany Efforts such as ours are as unpopular in our country as in other countries At a time when the whole German people is engaged in resisting the enemy, it seems superfluous to render to those who belong to foreign countries more than minimum services to which they are legally entitled But it is not only the thought of our kinsmen abroad which urges us to this work, it is our own desire to render friendly service (*Freundendienste*) to those who, through no fault of their own, are in difficulties because of the war Even in war time our neighbour is he who is in need of our help, and love for one's enemy (*Feindesliebe*) remains a sign whereby those who retain their faith in the Lord may recognise one another

Our Neighbour the Enemy

"We have been able to reassure German families as to the lot of their members in enemy countries, and in return to vouch to foreigners for the fact that their friends in our country will be able to rely on us for assistance if they need it We have been able to help as neighbours (*Naechstendienst*) innocent enemies, in whom we see human brothers and sisters Above and beyond this practical aid, we find conso lation and comfort in being able freely to hearken, even in such times as these, to the voice of humanity, and to the command "love thy neighbour' The tragedy which bursts over the earth on every side, which fills all our being with a religious respect for human suffering but also stirs our love and self sacrifice, enlarges our hearts and leaves no room except for feelings of affirmation and benevolent action

'Our desire to help and to alleviate suffering knows no frontiers This need is all the more urgent when we find in the sufferings of others the traits of what we ourselves also suffer What unites men goes deeper into our being than what separates them That we can tend the wounds that we are constrained to deal, and that the same is the case in the enemy's country, gives promise of the brighter days which will

come In the midst of the tempest which destroys all around us so many things which we consider worthy of eternal existence, the possibility of such action strengthens our courage and gives us hope that new bridges will be rebuilt, on which the men, who now find themselves separated will once more be closely united in a common effort'

I dedicate these noble words to my friends amongst the people of France, who have so often, by letter or by message, declared to me their sympathy for such thoughts and their unchanging faith in humanity I dedicate them to all in France who, even in these days, by their justice and goodness contribute to make their country loved as much as she makes herself admired by her arms—to those who assure her of the name which I read with emotion on a postcard written yesterday on his way to Geneva by a badly wounded German who had been repatriated the name of *gutes Frankreich*, "good France," or, as our tender hearted old writers used to say "Douce France"

R R

I take this opportunity of recommending to my French readers the publication of Mme

Arthur Spitzer (Geneva) *Le Paquet du prisonnier de guerre* It has contributors in Paris, and was founded in November "to bring comfort in their misery to such French, Belgians, and English prisoners as cannot be assisted by their families' It begs all who wish to send a parcel to a relation or friend who has been taken prisoner, to send with it, when possible, a similar consignment for some other prisoner—one of their fellow countrymen without relations, friends, or resources May this noble thought of solidarity be extended later, in more humane times, so that whoever helps a prisoner belonging to his own country may be willing at the same time to help an enemy prisoner!

R R

Journal de Genève March 15 1915

XIII

A LETTER TO *SVENSKA DAGBLADET* OF STOCKHOLM

THE European thought of to morrow is with the armies The furious intellectuals in one camp and the other who insult one another do not represent it at all The voice of the peoples who will return from the war, after having experienced the terrible reality, will send back into the silence of obscurity these men who have revealed them selves as unworthy to be spiritual guides of the human race Amongst those who thus retire more than one St Peter will then hear the cock crow and will weep saying "Lord, I have denied thee!"

The *Svenska Dagbladet* sent to the principal intel lectuals of Europe an inquiry on the subject of the results which the war would have "for international collaboration in the domain of the spirit" It asked "with anxiety to what extent it would be possible once peace was concluded to establish relations between the scientists, writers, and artists of the different nations"

A Letter to Sweden

The destinies of humanity will rise superior to those of all the nations Nothing will be able to prevent the reforming of the bonds between the thought of the hostile nations Whatever nation should stand aside would commit suicide For by means of these bonds the tide of life is kept in motion

But they have never been completely broken, even at the height of the war The war has even had the sad advantage of grouping together throughout the universe the minds who reject national hatred It has tempered their strength it has welded their wills into a solid block Those are mistaken who think that the ideals of a free human fraternity are at present stifled! They are but silent under the gag of military (and civil) dictation which reigns throughout Europe But the gag will fall and they will burst forth with explosive force I am agonised by the sufferings of millions of innocent victims, sacrificed to-day on the field of battle but I have no anxiety for the future unity of European society It will be realised anew The war of to day is its baptism of blood

R R

April 10 1915

XIV

WAR LITERATURE

THE intellectuals on both sides have been much in evidence since the beginning of the war, they have, indeed, brought so much violence and passion to bear upon it that it might almost be called their war!

It seems to me, however, that attention has not been sufficiently drawn to the fact that, with a few exceptions, it is only the voice of the older generation that has been heard—the voice of Academicians, and Professoren, of distinguished members of the press and the universities, of poets of established reputations, and the doyens of literature, art, and science

As far as France is concerned the explanation of this is simple nearly all those up to the age of forty eight who are able to bear arms are now acting instead of talking In Germany the situation is rather different, since for various reasons,

which I shall not attempt to elucidate much of the literary youth of the nation has remained at home, and continues to publish books Even those who are at the front contrive to send articles and poems to the Reviews (for the passion for writing dies hard in Germany)

It seems to me to be of importance to ascertain what spiritual currents are influencing the young intellectuals of Germany [1]

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It has been pointed out that in all countries the extremest views have been expressed by writers who have already passed *el mezzo del cammino* We shall attempt to find the reason for this at some later date At present we are content again to verify this fact in the case of German writers Almost all the celebrated and acknowledged poets, all those who were rich in years and in honour, were swept off their feet at the beginning of the war And this fact is all the more curious because some of them had been up to that time the apostles of peace, of pity, and of humanitarianism Dehmel, the enemy of war, the friend of all men, who said that he did not

[1] The literary appreciation of the work cited is here treated as of secondary importance in order that evidence may be discovered with regard to the thought of Germany

know to which of the ten nationalities he owed his intellect, is now writing Battle Songs (*Schlachtenlieder*), and Songs of the Flag (*Fahnenlieder*) apostrophising the enemy praising and dealing death (At the age of fifty one he is learning to bear arms, and has enlisted against the Russians) Gerhart Hauptmann, whom Fritz von Unruh calls "the poet of brotherly love" has shaken off his neurasthenia, and bids men "mow down the grass which drips with blood Franz Wedekind is pouring out invectives against Czarism Lissauer against England Arno Holz is raving deliriously Petzold desires to be in every bullet that enters an enemy's heart whilst Richard Nordhausen has written an Ode to a Howitzer[1]

At first the younger writers as well were possessed with the same madness for war but, in contact with the sufferings they endured and inflicted, it quickly disappeared Fritz von Unruh enlisted as a Uhlan and left for the front, crying "Paris Paris is our goal!" Since the Battle of the Aisne, in September he has written "Der Lamm" *Lamb of God I have seen thy pool of suffering Give us peace and rest lead us back to the heaven of love, and give us back our dead*

[1] See the article of Josef Luitpol Stern, "Dichter," in *Die Weissen Blatter*, March 1915

Rudolf Léonhard sang of war at the beginning, and is still fighting, on re reading his poems shortly afterwards he wrote on the front page "*These were written during the madness of the first weeks That madness has spent itself, and only our strength is left We shall again win control over ourselves and love one another*" Poets, hitherto unknown, are revealed by the cry of compassion wrung from their anguished hearts To Andrea Fram, who has remained at home, it is a grief that he does not suffer, whilst thousands of others suffer and die *All thy love, and all thy agony in spite of thy ardent desire, avail not to soothe the last hour of a single man who is dying yonder*" Upon Ludwig Marcl each minute weighs like a night mare —

> Menschen in Not
> Brüder dir tot
> Krieg ist im Land

The poet who writes under the pseudonym of Dr Owlglass proposed a new ideal for Germany, on the seventieth anniversary of the birth of Nietzsche (October 15th) not the superman, but at least—man And Franz Werfel realises this ideal in poems thrilling with a mournful humanity, which takes part in the sacrament of misery and death

"*We are bound together not only by our common words and deeds, but still more by the dying glance, the last hours, the mortal anguish of the breaking heart. And whether you bow down before the tyrant, or gaze trembling into the beloved's countenance or mark down your enemy with pitiless glance, think of the eye that will grow dim, of the failing breath, the parched lips and clenched hands, the final solitude and the brow that grows moist in the last agony. . . . Be kind. . . . Tenderness is wisdom, kindness is reason*.[1] . . . *We are strangers all upon this earth, and die but to be reunited*."[2]

But the one German poet who has written the serenest and loftiest words, and preserved in the midst of this demoniacal war an attitude worthy of Goethe, is Hermann Hesse. He continues to live at Berne, and sheltered there from the moral contagion, he has deliberately kept aloof from the combat. All will remember his noble article in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* of November 3rd, "*O Freunde, nicht diese Töne!*" in which he implored the artists and thinkers of Europe "to save what little peace" might yet be saved, and not to join with their pens in

[1] Hohe Gemeinschaft.

[2] Fremde sind wir auf der Erde alle.

destroying the future of Europe. Since then he has written some beautiful poems, one of which an Invocation to Peace, is inspired with deep feeling and classical simplicity, and will find its way to many an oppressed heart.

Jeder hat's gehabt
Keiner hat's geschätzt
Jeden hat der süsse Quell gelabt
O wie klingt der Name Friede jetzt

Klingt so fern und zag,
Klingt so tränenschwer
Keiner weiss und kennt den Tag,
Jeder sehnt ihn voll Verlangen her

('Each one possessed it but no one prized it. Like a cool spring it refreshed us all. What a sound the word Peace has for us now!

'Distant it sounds and fearful, and heavy with tears. No one knows or can name the day for which all sigh with such longing.")

The attitude of the younger reviews is curious for whereas the older, traditional reviews (those which correspond to our *Revue des Deux Mondes* or our *Revue de Paris*) are more or less affected by military fervour—thus, for instance, the *Neue Rundschau*, which printed Thomas Mann's

notorious vagaries on Culture and Civilisation (*Gedanken im Kriege*)—many of the younger ones affect a haughty detachment from actual events

That impassive publication, *Blatter fur die Kunst* over which broods the invisible personality of Stefan George, published at the end of 1914 a volume of poems of 156 pages, which did not contain a single line referring to the war A note at the end affirms that the points of view of the various authors have not changed on account of recent events, and anticipates the objection that "this is not the time for poetry," by the saying of Jean Paul 'No period has so much need of poetry, as the one which thinks it can do without it"

Die Aktion, a vibrating audacious Berlin review, with an ultra modern point of view, totally different from the calm impersonality of *Blatter fur die Kunst*, stated in its issue of August 15, 1914, that it would not concern itself with politics, but would contain only literature and art And if it finds room in its literary columns for the war poems sent from the field of battle by the military doctors, Wilhelm Klemm and Hans Kock, it is in consideration of their value as art, and not for the vivacity of their patriotic senti

ments, for it scoffs mercilessly at the ridiculous bards of German Chauvinism, at Heinrich Vierordt, the author of *Deutschland, hasse*, at the criminal poets who stir up hatred with their false stories, and at Professor Haeckel The dilettantism of this review is extreme Its weekly issues contain translations from the French of André Gide, Peguy and Leon Bloy, and reproductions of the works of Daumier Delacroix Cézanne, Matisse, and R de la Fresnaye (cubism flourishes in this Berlin review) The issue of October 24th is devoted to Péguy, and contains, as frontispiece, Egon Schiele's portrait of the man, who is honoured by Franz Pfemfert, the editor as the purest and most vigorous moral force in French literature of to day' Let us hasten to add, however, that as is often the case on the other side of the Rhine they are carried away by their zeal in deploring his death as of one of their countrymen and in proclaiming themselves his heirs But the pride which admires is at least superior to the pride which disparages

The most important of these young reviews is *Die Weissen Blatter* important on account of the variety of questions it deals with, and the value and number of its contributors as well as for the broad mindedness of its editor—René Schickele

An Alsatian by birth he belongs to those who feel most acutely the bitterness of the present struggle. After an interval of three months *Die Weissen Blätter*, which almost corresponds to our *Nouvelle Revue Française*, reappeared in January last with the following declaration, akin to that of the *Review of Nations*, at Berne: "*It seems good to us to begin the work of reconstruction in the midst of the war, and to aid in preparing for the victory of the spirit. The community of Europe is, at present apparently, destroyed. Is it not the duty of all of us who are not bearing arms, to live from to-day onwards according to the dictates of our conscience, as it will be the duty of every German when once the war is over?*"

By the side of these disinterested manifestoes about actual politics appear lengthy historical novels (*Tycho Brahe* by Max Brod) and satirical comedies by Carl Sternheim who continues to scourge the upper classes of German society and the capitalists, for *Die Weissen Blätter* is open to all questions of the day. But in spite of the actual differences which must necessarily exist between a German and a French review, we cannot but point out the frankly hostile attitude of these writers to all the excesses of Chauvinism. The articles of Max Scheler, "Europe and the

War" show an impartial attitude which is entirely praiseworthy The review opens its columns to the loyal Annette Kolb, who, as the daughter of a German father and of a French mother suffers keenly in this conflict between the parts of her nature, and has lately raised a tempest in Dresden, where in a public lecture she [illegible] to admit her fidelity to both sides and [illegible] her regret that Germany should fail to understand France. In the February number under the title "Ganz niedrich hängen!" there appeared a violent repudiation of the *Krieg mit dem Maul* (the war of tongues), "*If journalists hope to inspire courage by insulting the enemy, they are mistaken—we refuse such stimulants. We dare to maintain our opinion, that the humblest volunteer of the enemy who from an unreasoned but exalted sentiment of patriotism fires upon us from an ambush knowing well that he risks is much superior to those journalists who profit by the public feeling of the day and under cover of high sounding words of patriotism do not fight the enemy but spit upon him*"

Of all these young writers who are striving to preserve the integrity of their minds against the force of national passions, the one whose personality has been most exalted by this tempest,

the most eloquent, courageous, and decided of all is Wilhelm Herzog He is the editor of the *Forum* at Munich and like our own Peguy, when he began to publish his *Cahiers de la Quinzaine* he fills almost the whole of his review with his own burning articles The enthusiastic biographer of H von Kleist, he sees and judges the events of his own time with the eyes of that indomitable spirit The German censor attempts in vain to silence him and to forbid the publication of the lectures of Spitteler and of Annette Kolb his indignation and cries of vengeful irony spread even to us He attacks bitterly the ninety three intellectuals who *fancy they are all Ajaxes because they bray the loudest* those politicians of the school of Haeckel who make a new division of the world those patriotic birds who insult other nations he attacks Thomas Mann mercilessly scoffs at his sophistry and defends France the French Army [1] and French civilisation against him he points out that the great men of Germany (Grunwald Durer, Bach and Mozart amongst others) have always been persecuted humiliated and calumniated [2] In an article entitled *Der neue Geist* [3] after having

[1] *Die Uberschaetzung der Kunst* (December 1914)
[2] *Von der Vaterlandsliebe* (January 1915)
[3] December 1914

scoffed at the banality that has reappeared in the German theatres, and the literary mediocrity of patriotic productions he asked where "this new spirit" may be found and this gives him an opportunity to demolish Ostwald and Lasson

Where is it to be found? In the Hochschulen? Have we not read that incredibly clumsy (unwahrscheinlich plumpen) *appeal of the 99 professors? Have we not appreciated the statements of that double centenarian* (des zweihundertjährige Mummelgreises) *mummy Lasson? When I was studying philosophy as an undergraduate at the University of Berlin the theatre in which he lectured was a place of amusement* (Lachkabinett) *for us—nothing more. And to-day people take him seriously! English, French and Italian papers print his senile babblings against Holland as typical of the* Stimmung *of the German intellectuals. The wrong that these privy councillors and professors have done us with their Aufklärungsarbeit can hardly be measured. They have isolated themselves from humanity by their "inability" to realise the feelings of others.*

In opposition to these false representatives of a nation, these cultured gossips and political adventurers he extols the silent ones, the great mass of the people of all nations who suffer

in silence" and he joins with them in 'the invisible community of sorrow.'

"*One who is suffering and knows that his sorrow is shared by millions of other beings will bear it calmly; he will accept it willingly even because he knows that he is enriched thereby, made stronger, more tender, more humane.*"[1]

And he quotes the words of old Meister Eckehart: '*Suffering is the fastest steed that will bear you to perfection.*'

At the close of this summary review of the young writers of the war a place must be found for those whom the war has crushed—they counted amongst the best. Ernst Stadler was an enthusiastic admirer of French art and of the French spirit. He translated Francis Jammes, and on the eve of his death in November he was writing to Stefan Zweig from the trenches about the poems of Verlaine, which he was translating. The unfortunate George Trakl, the poet of melancholy, was made lieutenant of a

[1] *Hymne auf den Schmerz* (January 1915).—It is to be noted that the *Forum* is read in the trenches, and that it has received many letters of approval from the front (*Der Phrasenrausch und seine Bekaempfer*, February 1915.)

sanitary column in Galicia, and the sight of so much suffering drove him to despair and death And there are many hidden tragedies still unrevealed When they are made known, humanity will tremble in contemplating its handiwork

I reflected as doubtless many of my French readers have also done, in reading through these German writings inspired by the war—writings through which from time to time there passes a mighty breath of revolt and sorrow—that our young writers are not writing 'literature" Instead of books they give us deed and their letters And in re reading some of their letters I thought that ours had chosen the better part It is not for me now to point out the position that this heroic correspondence will occupy, not only in our history but also in our literature Into it the flower of our youth has put all its life its faith and its genius and for some of those letters I would give many of the finest lines of the noblest poems Whatever be the result of this war, and the opinion as to its value later, it will be recognized that France has written on paper, mud stained and often blotted with blood, some of its sublimest pages Assuredly this war touches us more nearly than it does our adversaries for who of us would have the heart to write a play

or a novel whilst his country is in danger and his brothers dying?

But I will make no comparisons between the two nations. For the present the essential thing is to show that even in Germany there are certain finer minds who are fighting against the spirit which we hate—the spirit of grasping imperialism and inhuman pride of military caste and the megalomania of pedants They are but a minority—we have no illusions about that—and we ought to redouble our efforts on that account to vanquish the common enemy Why then should we trouble to make these generous but feeble voices heard? Because their merit is the greater for being so little heeded because it is the duty of those who are fighting for justice to render justice in their turn to all those men even when they dwell in a country in which the state represents the violation of right by *Faustrecht*, who are defending with us the spirit of liberty

Journal de Genève, April 19, 1915

XV

THE MURDER OF THE ELITE

THE phrase is not new coined to-day,[1] but the fact is Never in any period have we seen humanity throwing into the bloody arena all its intellectual and moral reserves, its priests, its thinkers, its scholars its artists, the whole future of the spirit—wasting its geniuses as food for cannon

A great thing doubtless, when the struggle is great, when a people fights for an eternal cause the fervour of which fires the whole nation from the smallest to the greatest, when it fuses all the egoisms, purifies desire and out of many souls makes one unanimous soul

[1] I take the phrase from M Lucien Maury in an article written before the war (*Journal de Genève*, March 30 1914 This is quoted recently by M Adolphe Ferrière who in his remarkable Doctor's thesis *La loi du Progrès* attempts to solve the tragic problem of the part played by the elite

But if the cause be suspect or if it is tainted (as we judge that of our adversaries to be), what will be the situation of a moral élite which has preserved the sad and lofty privilege of perceiving at least a part of the truth, and which must nevertheless fight and die and kill for a faith which it doubts?

Those passionate natures that are intoxicated by fighting or are voluntarily blinded by the necessities of action are not troubled by these questions For them the enemy is a single mass, nothing else exists for them but this, for they have to break it, it is their function and their duty And to each his special duty But if minorities do not exist for such men, they do exist for us who, since we are not fighting have the liberty and the duty to see every aspect of the case—we who form part of the eternal minority, the minority which has been, is and always will be eternally oppressed It is for us to hear and to proclaim these moral sufferings! Plenty of others repeat or invent the jubilant echoes of the struggle May other voices be raised to give the tragic accents of the fight and its sacred horror!

I shall take my examples from the enemy camp, for several reasons because the German

cause being from the first tainted with injustice, the sufferings of the few who are just, and the still fewer who have spiritual perceptions are greater there than elsewhere, because these evidences appear openly in publications whose boldness the German censorship has not perceived, because I bow with respect to the heroic discipline of silence which France in fighting imposes on her sufferings. (Would to God that this silence were not broken by those who trying to deny these sufferings, profane the grandeur of the sacrifice by the revolting levity of their silly jests in newspapers which are without either gravity or dignity.)

I have shown in a recent article that a part of the intellectual youth of Germany was far from sharing the war madness of its elders. I cited certain energetic reproofs delivered by these young writers to the theorists of imperialism. And these writers are not, as one might think from an article in the *Temps* (though I gladly pay a tribute to its honesty), merely a small group as narrow as that of our symbolists. They count among them writers who appeal to a large public and who do not

set out in any way (except for the group of Stefan George) to write for a *select few*—they wish to write for all. I stated, too, that the boldest review of all, Wilhelm Herzog's *Forum* was read in the German trenches and received approbation thence.

But what is more astonishing, this spirit of criticism has possessed some of the combatants and even made its appearance among German officers. In the November–December number of the *Friedens Warte* published in Berlin, Vienna, and Leipzig, by Dr Alfred H. Fried, there occurs 'An appeal to the Germanic peoples' addressed at the end of October by Baron Marschall von Biberstein, Landrat of Prussia and captain in the 1st Foot Guards reserve. This article was written in a trench north of Arras, where on the 11th of November, Biberstein was killed. He expresses unreservedly his horror of the war and his ardent desire that it may be the last. '*That is the conviction of those at the front who are witnesses of the unspeakable horrors of modern warfare*.' Even more praiseworthy is Biberstein's frankness when he decides to begin a confession and a *mea culpa* for the sins of Germany. "*The war has opened my eyes*," he says, "*to our terrible unlovableness* (*Unbeliebtheit*). *Everything has its*

cause, we must have given cause for this hatred, and even in part have justified it Let us hope that it will not be the least of the advantages of this war that Germany will turn round on herself, will search out and recognise her faults and correct them' Unfortunately even this article is spoiled by Germanic pride which, desiring a world peace sets out to impose it on the world Herein it recalls in some respects the bellicose pacifism of the too celebrated Ostwald

But another officer (of whom I spoke in my last article) the poet Fritz von Unruh, first Lieutenant of Uhlans on the western front has written dramatic scenes in verse and prose These have appeared recently under the title *Before the Decision (Vor der Entscheidung)* It is a dramatic poem in which the author has noted his own impressions and his moral transformations The hero who is like himself, an officer of Uhlans, passes through various centres of the war and remains everywhere a stranger, his soul is detached from murderous passions, he sees the abominable reality until his sufferings from it amount to agony The two scenes reproduced by the *Neue Zurcher Zeitung* show us a muddy and bloodstained trench where German

soldiers, like beasts in a slaughter house die or await death with bitter words—and officers getting drunk on champagne around a 42 mm mortar, laughing and getting excited till they fall beneath the weight of sleep and fatigue

From the first scene I take these terrible words of one of those who wait in the trenches under fire of the machine guns a *Dreissigjæhriger* (man of thirty)

In my village they are laughing—they drink to each victory They slaughter us like butcher's cattle—and they say "It's war!" When it is over, they are no fools they will feast us for three years But the first cripple won't be grey headed before they will laugh at his white hairs

And the Uhlan, possessed by horror in the midst of the massacre, falls on his knees and prays

Thou who gavest life and takest it—how shall I recognise Thee? In these trenches strewn with mutilated bodies I find Thee not Does the piercing cry of these thousands suffocated in the terrible embrace of Death reach not up to Thee? Or is it lost in frozen space? For whom does Thy Springtime blossom? For whom is the splendour of Thy suns? For whom, O God? I ask it of Thee in the name of all those whose mouths are closed by courage and by fear in face of the horror of Thy darkness What heat is left within me? What light of truth? Can this massacre be Thy will? Is it indeed Thy will?

(*He loses consciousness and falls*)

The Murder of the Élite

A pain less lyrical, less ecstatic, more simple, more reflective, and nearer to ourselves marks the sequence of *Feldpostbriefe* of Dr Albert Klein, teacher in the Oberrealschule at Giessen and Lieutenant of the Landwehr killed on the 12th of February in Champagne[1] Passing over what are, perhaps, the most striking pages from the point of view of artistic quality and power of thought, I will only give two extracts from these letters which are likely to be of special interest to French readers

The first describes for us with an unusual frankness the moral condition of the German army

Brave, without care for his own life! Who is there among us that is that? We all know too well our own worth and our own possibilities we are in the flower of our age force is in our arms and in our souls and as no one willingly dies, no one is brave (*tapfer*) in the usual sense of the word or at least such are very rare It is just because bravery is so rare in life it is just for that that we expend so much religion, poetry, and thought (and this begins already at school) in celebrating as the highest fate death for one's fatherland, until it attains its climax in the false heroism which makes such a sensation about us in newspapers and speeches and

[1] The review *Die Tat* published by Eug. Diederichs at Jena prints long extracts from them in its issue for May 1915

which is so cheap—and also in the true heroism of a small number who do risk themselves and lead on the others. . . . We do our duty, we do what we *ought*: but it is a passive virtue. . . . When I read in the papers the scribblings of those who have a bad conscience because they are safely in the rear—when I read this talk which makes every soldier into a hero, I feel hurt. Heroism is a rare growth, and you cannot build on it a citizen army. To keep such an army together the men must respect their superiors, and even fear them more than the enemy. And the superiors must be conscientious, do their duty well, know their business thoroughly, decide rapidly and have control of their nerves. When we read the praises which those behind the line write of us we blush. Thank God old fashioned, robust shame is not dead in us. . . . Ah! my dear friends, those who are here don't speak so complacently of death, of disease, of sacrifice and of victory as do those who behind the line ring the bells, make speeches and write newspapers. The men here accustom themselves as best they may to the bitter necessity of suffering and of death if fate wills: but they know and see that many noble sacrifices, innumerable, innumerable sacrifices have already been made, and that already for a long while we shall have had more than enough of destruction on our side as well as the other. It is precisely when one has to look suffering in the face as I have that a tie begins to be formed that unites one to those over there on the other side (and one that unites you too with them, my friends. Yes, surely you feel it too, don't you?) If I come back from here (which I scarcely hope for any more) my dearest duty will be to soak myself in the study and the thoughts of those who have been our enemies. I wish to reconstruct my nature on a wider basis. . . . And I believe that it will be easier after this war than after any other to be a human being.

The Murder of the Élite

The second fragment is the account of a touching encounter with a French prisoner.

Yesterday evening I was strangely touched. I happened to see a convoy of prisoners and I talked to one of them, a colleague of mine, Professor of classical philology in the college of F——. Such an open-minded intelligent man, and with such a fine military bearing, like all his fellows, although they had just been through a terrible experience of machine-gun fire. It was a proof to me of the senselessness of the war. I thought how much one would have liked to be the friend of these men who are so near us in their education, their mode of life, the circle of their thought and their interest. We started talking about a book on Rousseau and we began to dispute like old philologists. How much we are alike in force and worth! And how little truth there is in what our papers tell us of the shaken and exhausted conditions of the French troops. As true, or rather as untrue, as what the French newspapers write about us. My French colleague showed in his remarks such a balanced mind and such understanding and estimation of German thought! To think that we were made so clearly to be friends and that we had to be separated! I was altogether overcome and sat down crushed by it. I thought and thought and could not escape my mood by any sophistry. No end, no end to a war which for nearly six months now has swallowed in its gulf men, fortunes, and happiness! And this feeling is the same with us as with the other side. It is always the same picture: we do the same thing, we suffer the same thing, we are the same thing. And it is precisely for this reason that we are so bitterly at enmity.

The same accent of troubled anguish, together with a despair which at moments nearly reaches

to madness and at others breathes a religious fervour, are seen in the letters of a German soldier to a teacher in German Switzerland (We have known of these at the Prisoners' Agency for three or four months and they were published in *Foi et Vie* of April 15th[1] They have been passed over in silence, so we shall persist in calling attention to them for they thoroughly deserve it) In these letters, which cover from the second fortnight of August to the end of December we see from the 25th of August onwards the evidence of a desire for peace among the German soldiers

We all even those who were hottest for the fight at the beginning, want nothing now but peace our officers just as much as ourselves Convinced as we are of the necessity to conquer warlike enthusiasm does not exist among us we fulfil our duty but the sacrifice is hard We suffer in our souls I cannot tell you the sufferings I endure

September oth A friend writes to me 'On the 20th to 25th of August I took part in big battles since then I suffer morally even to complete exhaustion, both physical and spiritual My soul finds no repose This war will show us how much of the beast still survives in man, and this revelation will cause us to make a great step out of animalism if not it is all up with us

November 28th (*A splendid passage Here one almost hears the voice of Tolstoi*) What are all the torments

[1] With an introduction by C E Babut

of war compared to the thoughts that obsess us night and day. When I am on some hill from which my view commands the plain, this is the idea which ceaselessly tortures me: down there in the valley the war rages; those brown lines which furrow the landscape are full of men who are facing one another as enemies. And up there on the hill opposite you there is, perhaps, a man who, like you, is contemplating the woods and the blue sky and perhaps ruminating the same thoughts as you, his enemy. This continual proximity might make one mad. And one is tempted to envy one's comrades who can kill time in sleeping and playing cards.

December [illegible]th. The desire for peace is intense in every one, at least in all those who are at the front and who are obliged to assassinate and be assassinated. The newspapers say that it's hardly possible to restrain the warlike ardour of the fighters. They lie—consciously or unconsciously. Our chaplains in their sermons dispute the lie and hold that our military ardour is slackening. You can hardly believe how much tittle tattle annoys us. Let them be silent and let them not talk about things of which they can know nothing [illegible] better still let them come not [illegible] almost [illegible] ho keep [illegible] rea but into the firing line rifle in hand. Perhaps then they will get to know of the inner changes which take place in so many of us. According to these chaplains any one who is without warlike enthusiasm is not a man such as our age demands. To me it seems that we are greater heroes than the others, we, who without being upheld by warlike enthusiasm, accomplish faithfully our duty, while hating war with our whole souls. They talk of a holy war. I know of no holy war. I only know of one war which is the sum of all that is inhuman, impious, and bestial in man; it is God's chastisement and a call to repentance for the people that throws itself into war or lets itself be drawn

into it God sends men through this hell so that they may learn to love heaven For the German people this war seems to me to be a punishment and a call to repentance,—and most of all for our German Church I have friends who suffer at the idea of being unable to do anything for the fatherland Let them stay at home with a calm conscience! All depends on their peaceful work But let the war enthusiasts come! Perhaps they will learn to keep silent

"Why publish these pages? I shall be asked by some people in France What good is it, when once war is let loose to arouse pity for our adversaries, at the risk of blunting the ardour of the combatants?'—I answer, because it is the truth, and because the truth substantiates our judgment, the judgment of the whole world against the German leaders and their policy What their armies have done we know, but that they were able to do it containing as they did such elements as those whose confessions we have just heard, incriminates still more deeply their masters From the depths of the battlefield, these voices of a sacrificed minority rise up as a vengeful condemnation of the oppressors To the accusations drawn up against predatory Empires and their inhuman pride, in the name of violated right, of outraged humanity by the victim peoples and by the combatants, is added the cry of pain

of the nobler souls of their own people whom the bad shepherds who let loose this war have led and constrained into murder and madness To sacrifice one's body is not the worst suffering, but also to sacrifice, to deny, to kill one's own soul!—You who die at least for a just cause, and who, full of sap and loaded with faith, fall like ripe fruit how sweet is your lot beside this torture! But we shall so act that these sufferings shall not be vain

Let the conscience of humanity hear and accept their complaint! It will resound in the future above the glory of battles, and whether she wills or no History will place it on her register History will do justice between the hangmen and their peoples And the peoples will learn how to deliver themselves from their hangmen

Journal de Genève, June 14, 1915

XVI

JAURÈS

BATTLES are being fought under our eyes in which thousands of men are dying yet the sacrifice of their lives does not always influence the issue of the combat In other cases the death of a single man may be a great battle lost for the whole of humanity The murder of Jaurès was such a disaster

Whole centuries were needed to produce such a life, rich civilisations of North and South of past and present, spread out on the good soil of France, matured beneath our Western skies The mysterious chance which combines elements and forces will not easily produce a noble spirit like his a second time

Jaurès is a type, almost unique in modern times, of the great political orator who is also a great thinker, and who combines vast culture with penetrating observation, and moral grandeur with energetic activity We must go back to antiquity

to find one who, like him, could stir the crowd and give pleasure to the few, pour out his over flowing genius not only in his speeches and social treatises but also in his philosophical and historical works,[1] and leave on all things the impress of his personality, the furrow of his robust labour the seeds of his progressive mind. I have listened to him often in the Chamber, at socialist congresses at meetings held on behalf of op pressed nations; he even did me the honour of presenting my *Danton* to the people of Paris. Again I see his full face, calm and happy like that of a kindly bearded ogre, his small eyes bright and smiling eyes as quick to follow the flight of ideas as to observe human nature. I see him pacing up and down the platform, walking with heavy steps like a bear his arms crossed behind his back and turning sharply to hurl at the crowd in his monotonous metallic voice

His principal philosophical work is his Doctor's thesis *La réalité du monde sensible* (1891). Another thesis (in Latin) dates from the same year *Des origines du socialisme allemand*, in which he goes back to the Christian socialism of Luther.

His great historical work is his *Histoire sociale de la Révolution*. Very interesting is his discussion with Paul Lafargue on *l'Idéalisme et le matérialisme dans la conception de l'histoire*.

words like the call of a trumpet which reached the farthest seats in the vast amphitheatre and went straight to the heart, making the soul of the whole multitude leap in one united emotion. What beauty there was in the sight of these proletarian masses stirred by the visions which Jaurès evoked from distant horizons, imbibing the thought of Greece through the voice of their tribune!

Of all this man's gifts the most fundamental was to be essentially a *man*—not the man of a single profession or class or party or idea, but a complete, harmonious and free man. His all-comprehensive nature could be the slave of nothing. The highest manifestations of life flowed together and met in him. His intelligence demanded unity,[1] his heart was full of a passion for liberty;[2] and this twofold instinct protected him alike from party despotism and anarchy. His

[1] "The need of unity is the profoundest and noblest of the human mind." (*La réalité du monde sensible.*)

[2] "This young democracy must be given a taste for liberty. It has a passion for equality; it has not in the same degree an idea of liberty, which is acquired much more slowly and with greater difficulty. We must give the children of the people, by means of a sufficiently lofty exercise of their powers of thinking, a sense of the value of man and consequently of the value of liberty, without which man does not exist." (To the teachers, January 15, 1888.)

spirit sought to encompass all things not in order to do violence to them but to bring them into harmony Above all, he had the power of seeing the *human* element in all things and this universal sympathy was equally averse to narrow negation and fanatical affirmation All intolerance inspired him with horror[1]

He had put himself at the head of a great revolutionary party but it was with the desire of saving the great work of democratic revolution from the sickening and brutal odour of blood, murder and hatred which still clings to the memory of the middle class Revolution In his own name and in the name of his party he demanded with regard to all doctrines respect for the human personality and for the spirit which is manifested in each The mere feeling of the moral antagonism which exists between man and man even when there is no open conflict, the sense of the invisible barriers which render human brotherhood impossible was painful to him He could not read those words of Cardinal Newman in which he speaks of the gulf of damnation,

[1] 'As for myself I have never made use of violence to attack beliefs whatever they may be nay, more I have always abstained even from that form of violence which consists in insult Insult expresses a weak and feverish revolt, rather than the liberty of reason' (1901)

which, even in this life, is fixed between men, without having "a sort of nightmare He saw the abyss ready to gape beneath the feet of fragile and unhappy human beings who think themselves bound together by a community of sympathy and suffering'—the sadness of this thought obsessed him

To fill in this abyss of misunderstanding was his life work Herein lay the originality of his standpoint, that although he was the spokesman of the most advanced parties, he became the continual mediator between conflicting ideas He sought to unite them all in the service of progress and of the common good In philosophy he united idealism and realism—in history, the past and the present—in politics, the love of his own country and a respect for other countries[1] He refrained from denouncing that which has been, in the name of that which is to be, as many so called free thinkers have done and far from condemning, he upheld the theories of all those who had been fighters in past centuries to what

[1] 'The true formula of patriotism is the equal right of all countries to liberty and justice, it is the duty of every citizen to increase in his own country the forces of liberty and justice Those are but sorry patriots who in order to love and serve one country find it necessary to decry the others, the other great moral forces of humanity" (1905)

ever party they might have belonged "We reverence the past," he said 'Not in vain have blazed the hearths of all the generations of mankind—but it is we who are advancing, who are fighting for a new ideal, it is we who are the true inheritors of the hearth of our ancestors We have taken the flame thereof, you have preserved only the ashes (January 1909) In his Introduction to *l'Histoire socialiste de la Révolution*, in which he attempts to reconcile Plutarch, Michelet, and Karl Marx, he writes "We hail with equal respect all men of heroic will History, even when conceived as a study of economic forms, will never dispense with individual valour and nobility The moral level of society to morrow will be determined by the standard of morality of conscience to day So that to offer the examples of all the heroic fighters who for the past century have been inspired by an ideal and held death in sublime contempt, is to do revolutionary work" In everything he touches he achieves a generous synthesis of life he imposes his grand panoramic conception of the universe, the sense of the manifold and moving unity of all things This admirable equilibrium of countless elements presupposes in the man who achieves it magnificent health of body and of mind, a mastery of his whole being

And Jaurès possessed this mastery and because of it he was the pilot of European democracy.

How clear and far reaching was his foresight! In years to come, when the record of the war of to-day is set down he will appear therein as a terrible witness. Was there anything he did not foresee? One needs only to read through his speeches during the last ten years.[1] It is yet too early, in the midst of the conflict to quote freely his predictions concerning the coming retribution. Let us recall only his agonised presentiment, ever since the year 1905 of the monstrous war which was imminent,[2] his consciousness "of the antagonism now muffled now acute but always profound and terrible between Germany and England (November 18 1909),[3] his denunciation of the secret dealings of European finance and diplomacy dealings which are encouraged by the "torpor of public spirit", his cry of alarm

[1] Or the extracts given by Charles Rappoport in his excellent book *Jean Jaurès, homme, le penseur, le socialiste* (1915, Paris, *L'Émancipatrice*), with an introduction by Anatole France. See also the pamphlet by René Legrand, *Jean Jaurès*. From this book are quoted the passages referred to in the notes which follow. *Jean Jaurès*, a brochure by René Legrand should also be read.

[2] Rappoport, *op. cit.*, pp. 70–77.

[3] Rappoport, p. 234.

at 'the sensational lies of the press, actuated by the rotten system of capitalism, sowing panic and hatred and playing cynically with the lives of millions of men through mere financial considerations or delirious pride', his contemptuous words for those whom he calls 'the jockeys of his country', his clear perception of all responsibilities[1] his foreknowledge of the domesticated attitude which would be adopted in case of war by the Social-democratic party of Germany to whom he showed as in a mirror (at the Amsterdam Congress in 1904) their haughty weakness their lack of revolutionary tradition, their want of parliamentary strength their formidable powerlessness[2] of the attitude which certain leaders of French Socialism too, and amongst others Jules Guesde would maintain in the conflict between the great States of Europe[3] and, looking even beyond the war his premonition of the consequences near and remote, national and international of this conflict of nations

How would he have acted had he lived? The

In his speech at Vaise near Lyon July 25 1914, six days before his death, he said 'Every people appears throughout the streets of Europe carrying its little torch and now comes the conflagration'

Rappoport, p 61

[3] Rappoport, p 369-70

proletariat of Europe looked to him for guidance and had faith in him—Camille Huysmans has said so in the speech delivered at his grave in the name of the Workers' International[1] There can be no doubt that when he had fought against the war until all hope of preventing it was gone, he would have yielded loyally to the common duty of national defence and taken part in it with all his might He had announced this point of view at the Congress in Stuttgart, in 1907 in full agreement therein with Vandervelde and Bebel "If, whatever the circumstances a nation were to refuse from the outset to defend itself, it would be entirely at the mercy of the Governments of violence barbarism, and reaction A unity of mankind which was the result of the absorption of conquered nations by one dominating nation would be a unity realised in slavery" On his return to Paris, in giving an account of the Congress to French Socialists (September 7,

[1] "Throughout the world there are six millions of us, organised workmen, for whom the name of Jaurès was the incarnation of the noble and most complete aspiration I remember what he was for the workmen of other countries I see still the foreign delegate who awaited his words before forming their final opinions even when they were not in agreement with him they were glad to approach his point of view He was more than the Word he was the Conscience"

1907, at the Tivoli Vaux Hall), he impressed upon them their double duty—war against war, so long as it is only a menace upon the horizon, and in the hour of danger war in defence of national independence For this great European was also a great Frenchman [1] Yet it is certain too that the firm accomplishment of his patriotic duty would not have prevented him from maintaining his human ideals, and watching with untiring eyes for every opportunity of reconstructing the shattered unity Certainly he would not have allowed the vessel of socialism to drift as his feeble successors have done

* * *

He has passed from us But the reflection of his luminous genius, his kindness in the

Who has spoken more nobly than he of the eternal France 'the true France that is not summed up by an epoch or by a day neither by the day of long ago nor the day that has just passed but the whole of France complete in the succession of her days of her nights of her dawns of her shadows, of her heights and of her depths of France who across all these mingled shades, all these half lights and all these vicissitudes, goes forward towards a brilliance which she has not yet attained but which is foreshadowed in her thought!' (1910)

See his masterly picture of French history, and his magnificent eulogy of France, at the Conference of 1905, which he was prevented from delivering in Berlin, and which Robert Fischer read in his place

bitter struggle, his indestructible optimism even in the midst of disaster, shine above the carnage of Europe, over which the dusk is gathering like the splendour of the setting sun!

There is one page which he wrote, which cannot be read without emotion—an immortal page in which he represents the noble Herakles, resting after his labours on the maternal earth

'There are hours' he says, "when in feeling the earth beneath our feet, we experience a joy deep and tranquil as the earth herself How often on my journey along footpaths and across fields I have realised suddenly that it was indeed the earth on which I trod, that I belonged to her, as she belonged to me! Then without thinking I went more slowly, because it was not worth while to hasten across her surface, because I was conscious of her and possessed her at each step I took, and my soul was moving within her depths How many times at the fall of day as I lay by the side of a ditch, my eyes turned towards the faint blue of the eastern sky, I have suddenly realised that the earth was speeding on her journey hastening from the fatigues of the day and the limited horizons which the sun illumines, and rushing with prodigious force towards the

serenity of night and unlimited horizons, and bearing me with her I felt in my body as in my soul and in the earth herself as in my body, the thrill of this journey, and a strange, sweetness in those blue spaces which opened out before us, without a shock, without a fold without a murmur Oh! how much deeper and more intense is this kinship of our flesh with the earth, than the vague and wandering kinship of our eyes with the starry heavens How much less beautiful the night with its stars would be to us did we not feel ourselves at the same time bound to the earth."

He has returned to the earth—that earth which belonged to him, that earth to which he belonged They have again taken possession of each other and his spirit is even now warming and humanising her Beneath the torrents of blood shed upon his tomb the new life and the peace of to morrow are already springing It was a favourite and often repeated thought of Jaurès, as of Heraclitus of old, that nothing can interrupt the flow of things, that 'peace is only a form or aspect of war, war only a form or aspect of peace, and what is conflict to day is the beginning of the reconciliation of to-morrow"

R R.

Journal de Geneve, August 2, 1915

NOTES

To Page 19 (Letter to Gerhart Hauptmann)

The letter to Gerhart Hauptmann, written after the destruction of Louvain, and in the stress of the emotion aroused by the first news was provoked by a high sounding article of Hauptmann which appeared a few days previously In that letter he rebutted the accusation of barbarism hurled against Germany, and returned it against Belgium The article ended as follows

' I assure M Maeterlinck that no one in Germany thinks of imitating the act of his 'civilised nation' We prefer to be and to remain the German barbarians for whom the women and the children of our enemies are sacred I can assure him that we never thoughtlessly massacre and make martyrs of Belgian women and children Our witnesses are on our frontiers the socialist beside the bourgeois, the peasant beside the savant, and the prince beside the workman and all fight with a full realisation of the object, for a noble and rich national treasure, for internal and external goods which aid the progress and the ascent of humanity '

To Page 41 ('Above the Battle")

My enemies have not failed to make use of this passage to attribute to me sentiments of contempt with regard to the peoples of Asia and Africa This charge is all the less

justified in that I have precious friendships amongst the intellectuals of Asia, with whom I have remained in correspondence during this war These friends have been so little misled as to my real thought that one of them, a leading Hindu writer Ananda Coomaraswamy has dedicated to me an admirable essay which appeared in the *New Age* (December 1914), entitled "A World Policy for India' but—

1 Asiatic troops recruited amongst races of professional warriors in no way represent the thought of Asia, as Coomaraswamy agrees

2 The heroism of the troops of Africa and Asia is not under discussion There was no need for the hecatombs which have been made during the past year, to evoke admiration for their splendid devotion

3 As regards barbarism, I am glad to confess that now the "white skins can no longer reproach "skins black, red, or yellow in this respect

4 It is not the latter but the former whom I blame I denounce to day once more with as much vigour as fourteen months ago, the short sighted policy which has introduced Africa and Asia into the quarrels of Europe The future will justify my indictment

R R

The terms Asia and Africa have not of course a geographical but an ethnological significati on Turkey is not and never has been European and it is difficult to decide up to what point certain of the Balkan Powers are European

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